

Temporary e-travel pass available for Macau residents with urgent travel needs

Yuki Lei

Regarding the loss of one's so-called "Home Return Permit", regulations by the Ministry of Public Security require the holder to visit a China Travel Service (CTS) agency or the public security organs of the Exit-Entry Administration Bureau to fill in a lost document registration form and an application form before applying for a one-time temporary permit – however, the National Immigration Administration (NIA) announced yesterday that residents of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan can now also apply online for a temporary electronic travel pass for urgent travel needs, valid for seven days.

The new measure took effect yesterday.

The "Home Return Permit", officially known as, Mainland Travel Permit for Hong Kong and Macao Residents, can be applied for by Hong Kong permanent residents of Chinese nationality, Macau permanent residents of Chinese nationality, or Macau permanent residents of Chinese-Portuguese origin who have not yet chosen their nationality.

According to yesterday's NIA announcement, the "facilitation measure" applies to Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan residents who have lost, destroyed, or forgotten to carry their mainland travel permits but are in need of urgent travel by air or train between mainland cities; or who have a need to link their mainland travel permits with their residence permits for handling personal affairs.

The NIA stated that applicants can apply for the seven-day e-travel pass to the mainland via the Exit-Entry Administration Bureau's service platform, which is verifiable by civil aviation, railways, and other agencies, helping to "avoid delays in their travel".

"China's Exit-Entry Administration Bureau has decided to ... provide 'two-card linkage' verification services for mainland travel permits and residence permits," according to the announcement.

The NIA underlined the inconvenience caused by the fact that some Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan residents who hold both



This photo taken last night shows the interface, including its new e-travel function (red circle), of the National Immigration Administration's (NIA) service platform, where residents of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan can apply for their temporary electronic travel pass in cases of urgent travel needs. – Photo: Rui Pastorin

a mainland travel permit and a Residence Permit face difficulties in verifying the relationship between the two permits when using one for business purposes, such as financial transactions and online activities, while retaining the other.

The announcement clarified that

the temporary e-travel pass can be used to demonstrate to authorities and businesses the link between their mainland travel permit and residence permit. It also stated that residents of Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan who need to verify the connection between their mainland



travel permits, and residence permits for personal matters can submit an application through the government service platform. Alternatively, they can apply to the Exit-Entry Administration Bureau for a written confirmation.

Government agencies and businesses that serve residents of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan can also integrate their systems with the NIA's authentication platform to enable automated verification.

Continued on p.5



President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, greets a toddler while visiting the Old Town of Lijiang in Lijiang City, Yunnan Province, on Wednesday. Xi paid an inspection visit to Yunnan between Wednesday and yesterday. (Story on p.7) – Xinhua

Senator Marcos on ex-president Duterte's ICC arrest: 'Since when has the Philippines become a province of The Hague?'

MANILA – Senator Imee Marcos yesterday lamented the arrest and handing over of ex-president Rodrigo Duterte to the International Criminal Court (ICC), wondering if the "Philippines has become a province of The Hague."

"Since when did the Philippines become [a] province of The Hague?" asked Marcos in her opening statement during a Senate Committee on Foreign Relations hearing, referring to the city in the Netherlands where the ICC is located.

Marcos, the committee chair, lamented that the 79-year-old former president was made to answer to a foreign court.

"Here we are watching as a fellow Filipino, a leader, a father, and a grandfather, a man who served this country, is taken not by

his own people but by outsiders who claim to have the right to judge him," Marcos added.

Marcos, an elder sister of Philippine President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos, said the law should prevail: "But whose law? Ours or theirs?"

She added Filipinos are not "slaves" to foreigners and that the country should not surrender its citizens to the jurisdiction of foreigners.

On March 11, the International Criminal Police Organization arrested Duterte over a warrant issued by the ICC for crimes against humanity related to his controversial "war on drugs" campaign.

Duterte is the first former Asian leader to be detained and face trial before the ICC. (More on p.8) – Xinhua

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Li stresses need for stable foreign trade, high-level opening-up

Premier Li Qiang has called for the stabilization of foreign trade with a pioneering and innovative spirit, and for the accelerated creation of new strengths in high-level opening-up.

– Story on p. 6

Netanyahu blasts Israel's 'deep state' in Tik Tok video

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, facing accusations of trying to concentrate power in the executive branch, has blasted "left-leaning" administrators in a TikTok video warning of the dangers of the "deep state".

– Story on p. 10

France axes modern 'Beauty and the Beast' for schoolkids

France's education ministry has cancelled an order for "Beauty and the Beast" with modern illustrations, saying a cartoonist's 21st-century version including a police sniffer dog and smartphones was inappropriate for tweens.

– Story on p. 12

9 locals cheated by wedding ring design centre out of 120,000 patacas: police

Yuki Lei

The Consumer Council (CC) announced last Saturday that it had received seven complaints regarding wedding rings ordered from the Macau branch of a Hong Kong-based wedding ring design centre that were not delivered as promised, while the Judiciary Police (PJ) added yesterday that between last Friday and Wednesday this week, nine local residents reported believing that they had fallen victim to the shop's scam, with a total of 120,000 patacas involved.

PJ spokesman Chao Teng Hin said: "The Judiciary Police place great importance to the cases and will make every effort to track down the suspects."

Between October last year and January this year, the victims found the shop on Instagram and ordered diamond rings during exhibitions held at two local hotels in Zape, with the sum involved in their transactions ranging from 7,596 patacas to 20,000 patacas.

According to yesterday's regular PJ press conference, the victims were informed at the time of their orders that it would take several months to make the diamond rings. However, after several months passed without receiving their goods and upon learning from Hong Kong news that the shop had closed down, they visited its Macau branch at a commercial centre in Zape to enquire further, only to discover that the shop in Macau had also shut its doors.

Chao noted that the PJ investigation identified the suspect

as a Hong Kong resident who has since left Macau. He added that, through their cooperation channels, the Judiciary Police informed their counterparts in Hong Kong about the case.

HK Customs nab sole director

Meanwhile, Hong Kong Customs announced earlier yesterday the arrest of a 41-year-old Hong Kong man, the sole director of a wedding ring design company, on Wednesday for his alleged involvement in several recent cases of repeated delays in the delivery of wedding rings ordered by customers, saying that the company eventually closed its retail shops earlier this month

Hong Kong Customs, according to its statement, arrested the man on suspicion of fraudulently accepting payments when selling the products, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO). The statement noted that Hong Kong Customs, as of 8 a.m. yesterday, had received a total of 57 complaints against the company concerned, all of which said that they had placed prepaid orders for wedding rings, but failed to receive the goods or obtain refunds from the company, involving a total of about HK\$520,000, with the highest amount of about HK\$20,000 in one case.

When asked whether the Hong Kong suspect was the man arrested by Hong Kong Customs, the Judiciary Police said during yesterday afternoon's press conference that they were in the process of checking with the relevant Hong Kong authorities to confirm the suspect's identity, adding that further announcements would be made in due course.

The Macau Consumer Council remarked in response to an enquiry by public broadcaster TDM that the number of complaints about the company had reached 16, as of Wednesday.

Neither the Judiciary Police, nor the Consumer Council, nor Hong Kong Customs disclosed the name of the company, but according to several Hong Kong media reports, the company involved is called Mary 5ive, a Hong Kong-based wedding ring design centre which was established 10 years ago and ran three branches, including one in Macau. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Chao Teng Hin looks on during yesterday's regular press conference at the Public Security Police (PSP) press room in Zape. - Photo: Yuki Lei

SJM, UTM launch 'Forge My Own Journey'

Kristina Vallesteros

SJM Resorts and the Macao University of Tourism (UTM) have recently launched the SJM "Forge My Own Journey" Development Programme, with the signing and inauguration ceremony held last week at the Grand Pavilion in the Grand Lisboa Palace (GLP) in Cotai.

An SJM statement yesterday noted that the programme combines theoretical education with practical work experience. SJM Managing Director Daisy Ho Chiu Fung and UTM Rector Fanny Vong Chuk Kwan, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the programme.

The signing was witnessed by Sun Yaohua, director of the Economic Department of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macao SAR; Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) Director Chan Un Tong; and Tang Wai Keong, director of the Education Resources Department of the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ).

The statement highlighted that the programme will last four years and provide students with internships in various SJM departments, including Hotel Operations and Food and Beverage (F&B) Management. Students will receive monthly salaries and fringe benefits during their internships, helping them gain work experience. Graduates will receive full tuition sponsorship for their studies at UTM and opportunities for junior management roles at SJM.



This handout photo taken on March 12 and provided by SJM yesterday shows UTM Rector Fanny Vong Chuk Kwan (third from left) and SJM Managing Director Daisy Ho Chiu Fung (fourth from left) officiating the "Forge My Own Journey" Development Programme launch ceremony at Grand Lisboa Palace (GLP) in Cotai.

The programme will welcome 70 Form 6 graduates in the 2025 academic year. The statement noted that there was strong interest, with over 2,000 students and parents attending 30 information sessions organised with 26 local secondary schools. Some of the successful applicants ranked among the top of their classes, with some choosing this programme over direct admissions to universities in the mainland, the statement said.

Ho emphasised SJM's commitment to nurturing local talent, stating, "This collaboration aims to leverage SJM's extensive experience in the integrated tourism and leisure industry alongside UTM's strong academic foundation." She also highlighted

the goal of cultivating the next generation of professionals equipped with both international vision and professional competence.

Vong echoed this sentiment, noting that the programme equips students with comprehensive knowledge through a blend of theoretical learning and practical application. "This programme enables students to swiftly embark on professional paths within the integrated tourism and leisure industry," she said.

The statement indicated that SJM plans to work closely with local educational institutions in the future to "support talent development and enhance employee skills" in Macau's tourism and leisure sectors. ■

Fire erupts in flat near Barrier Gate checkpoint, 'cause unknown'

Yuki Lei

A fire broke out in a residential flat in the Barrier Gate area yesterday morning, resulting in a man and two women being rushed to the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre – and the Fire Services Bureau (CB) noted in the afternoon that the cause of the fire was still unknown, and that the Judiciary Police (PJ) have been notified to conduct a follow-up investigation.

The incident occurred on the 15th floor of Fong Nam Building on Istmo de Ferreira do Amaral. Firefighters arrived at the scene and noticed flames in the flat's living room, necessitating the use of fire hoses to extinguish the blaze. The three victims, aged 51 to 74, were taken to the hospital for treatment due to cardiac arrest, smoke inhalation, and emotional agitation. Two of the victims live in the affected unit, while the third victim lives elsewhere in the building, according to a CB statement.

About 10 dwellers self-evacuated.

According to the bureau, the doorway, wardrobe, and various



A Public Security Police (PSP) officer watches the area while firefighters battle a blaze in the flat of a residential building in the Barrier Gate area yesterday morning. - Photo courtesy of TDM

items in the flat were burnt, with the walls of the living room blackened. However, there was no heat source or electricity supply near the fire point, the Fire Services Bureau pointed out in its statement, adding that "the cause of the fire remains unknown".

Cardiac arrest victim dies

Meanwhile, according to a statement by the Judiciary Police early today, the 54-year-old male victim who suffered a cardiac arrest was pronounced dead at the public

hospital after emergency efforts to revive him proved unsuccessful.

The autopsy report indicated, as noted by the statement, that the victim, who had been found lying face down outside the bathroom door, showed no signs of suspicious or potentially criminal injuries.

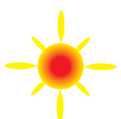
The Judiciary Police's initial investigation noted that the fire apparently originated in the bedroom floor, where burnt items were found. The items have been removed for forensic examination, the statement added. ■

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Macau Weather

DRY.
MAINLY FINE.
FORCE 2 TO 3 EAST TO NORTHEASTERLY WINDS.
RELATIVE HUMIDITY WILL RANGE BETWEEN 30% AND 90%.



15°C~25°C

Source: SMG

The Parisian Macao to host 'Wedding Open House' at weekend

Rui Pastorin

Integrated resort (IR) operator The Parisian Macao said in a statement yesterday that it will be hosting a Wedding Open House at its Parisian Ballroom in Cotai this weekend.

Among the highlights are tours of the ballroom and outdoor venues, a showcase of decorative arrangements and floral displays by designers, gourmet tastings, and consultations with wedding specialists. Moreover, a selection of exclusive packages and special offers will also be available.

Describing its venues, the statement noted that one can choose to hold their wedding in the 3,400-square-metre ballroom which features eight-metre-high ceilings and can accommodate up to 2,600 guests, while

one can also opt for an "intimate poolside ceremony under the stars" on the pool deck that also features views of the Eiffel Tower, hosting up to 500 guests for cocktail soirées.

Meanwhile, there are also master-chef-crafted menus that feature French haute cuisine and global flavours, "couture-level design" through floral installations, custom décor and thematic styling, as well as "unmatched hospitality".

The Parisian Macao also features an expert team of wedding specialists who will collaborate with couples to reflect their vision, the statement said.

More details can be found on <https://en.sandsresortsmacao.com/meetings/event-types/wedding-n-celebrations.html>



This undated handout photo provided yesterday by The Parisian Macao shows a wedding banquet set up at the Parisian Ballroom in Cotai.

February visitors drop 4.4 pct to 3.1 million



Visitors gather outside S. Domingos Church in the city centre early last month. – Photo: Rui Pastorin

Staff Reporter

Macau's visitor arrivals dropped by 4.4 percent year on year to 3.14 million last month, "mainly due to a relatively high comparison base resulting from the Chinese New Year holiday that lasted eight days in mainland China in February last year," the Statistics and Census Bureau (DSEC) said in a statement yesterday.

This year, the Chinese New Year (CNY) fell on January 29. Last year, it fell on February 10.

According to the statement, overnight visitors decreased by 11.7 percent year on year to 1.25 million, while same-day visitors rose by 1.1 percent to 1.88 million.

Visitors' average length of stay

remained unchanged at 1.1 days. Overnight visitors' average length of stay also remained unchanged, at 2.2 days.

Mainland Chinese visitors dropped by 6.4 percent to 2.29 million, or 72.8 percent of the total number of visitor arrivals. Hong Kong visitors fell by 4.7 percent to 579,843, or 18.4 percent.

Foreign visitors rose by 17.9 percent to 207,728 in February, or 6.6 percent of the total. Most international visitors were from South Korea (59,330), up 41.8 percent, and the Philippines (38,847), down 2.5 percent.

Meanwhile, in the first two months of the year, the number of visitor arrivals rose by 10.4 percent to 6.79 million. ■

ell

Macao International Parade

Celebration of the 26th Anniversary of Macao's Return to the Motherland

Opening Ceremony **15:00**
Ruins of St. Paul's

Finale Performance **18:30**
Sai Van Lake Square

2025.03.23

www.icm.gov.mo/macoparade

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Wang Zhengping's 'The Wind Blows Through the Grassland' exhibition opens

Interview by Rui Pastorin

The first of three photography exhibitions in this year's "The Script Road – Macau Literary Festival 2025" opened last night at the Tap Seac Gallery, showcasing the black and white images captured by lensman Wang Zhengping.

Wang is from the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

Titled "The Wind Blows Through the Grassland", the Mongolian community and Mongolian horses are the subjects of Wang's latest exhibition, which is curated by João Miguel Barros and Na Risong. It offers "a poetic look at the vast open spaces of Inner Mongolia and those who inhabit them", according to a recent statement by the literary festival's organisers. And upon seeing the works, curator João Miguel Barros told the Post that he hopes exhibitiongoers can be amazed by Wang's works.

Miguel Barros, a lawyer by profession and a lensman himself, said that he first saw Wang's works when he went to a photo festival in the mainland. "I discovered his work with the communities in Inner Mongolia and I was amazed with the way that he approached the scenarios", speaking with Wang a few months later.

He added that he was also completely impressed with Wang's photographs of horses after being shown one of his books, likening the images to the aesthetic approach of magic realism. Referring to his curatorial statement, Miguel Barros pointed out that that this genre combines "elements of reality with touches of fantasy, surrealism or dreams". It seeks to capture moments that may seem ordinary at first glance, but reveal "an extraordinary depth or quality when observed closely".

These can be seen in examples such as "the way lighting is used to accentuate the beauty of an image or the narrative sequence of a set of images, or the way editing is done to better emphasise details or contrasts", according to the curatorial statement. Regarding the photos featuring horses, they are dream-like, presenting something that seems unreal but is in fact real, Miguel Barros pointed out.

Meanwhile, elaborating on its curation, Miguel Barros said that he had to look at the space and the areas that the gallery has to better understand how he could connect the images and create a dialogue. His work involved everything from photo sizing, figuring out how to connect the images to tell stories and how to group them. "This was my work as curator and I'm very happy with the result", Miguel Barros said, inviting everyone to come visit the gallery and admire Wang's works.

Exhibitiongoers can catch the exhibition until April 28, with the free-admission gallery open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

The Script Road – Macau Literary Festival will officially kick off today with an opening ceremony at the Former Barra Slaughterhouse Site, offering a raft of activities over its 10-day run. Aside from the three photography exhibitions, there will be discussion sessions featuring over 20 writers from different parts of the world, two concerts, six movie screenings, three workshops and two guided tours, with more details available on the event Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/macaulitfest>

The annual festival ends on Sunday, March 30.



Photos: Rui Pastorin

Govt advances this year's elderly sports day to next month

Tony Wong

Macau's annual one-day sports event for senior citizens, which was normally held in August or September in previous years, will be scheduled a few months earlier than normal this year, on April 13, with the aim of enabling the local government to focus on its organisation and preparation in the second half of the year on the Macau segment of the upcoming 15th National Games, which will be held in November, the Sports Bureau (ID) said yesterday.

The bureau held a press conference at its headquarters in Zape yesterday to announce details of the 2025 Macau Elderly Sports Day.

The 15th National Games will be jointly hosted by Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau between November 9 and 21.

While the games' opening and closing ceremonies will be held in Guangzhou on November 9 and in Shenzhen on November 21 respectively, events in Macau will be held between November 7 and 20.

The annual Macau Elderly Sports Day is jointly organised by the Sports Bureau and the Macau Elderly Sports Association, with the Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations (known as Kai Fong in Cantonese), the Macau Federation of Trade Unions (known as Gung Luen in Cantonese), the Macau Women's General Association (known as Fu Luen in Cantonese), and the Macao Polytechnic University's (MPU) Seniors Academy as the event's co-organisers.

Addressing yesterday's press conference, Macau Elderly Sports Association President Leong Chong Leng pointed out that the event has been held every year since 2006, with last year's marking the 19th edition.

As in previous years, this year's Macau Elderly Sports Day will be held at Tap Seac Multisport Pavilion.

The one-day sports event for seniors will be held between 9 a.m. and 12 noon on April 13.

Macau residents born in or before 1974 are now eligible to sign up for the event, i.e., those aged 50 or over, according to yesterday's press conference.

Potential participants can collect registration forms from the Sports Bureau's headquarters, Tap Seac Multisport Pavilion, Macau Stadium in Taipa, the MPU Seniors Academy, as well as facilities run by Kai Fong, Gung Luen and Fu Luen. They can also download the forms from the bureau's website.

Potential participants will be required to submit their forms by 12 noon on April 3 to the aforementioned venues, or by faxing their forms to 8796 5611.

During the press conference, Chao Kuok Wai, who heads the bureau's Sports Development Department, said that his bureau has decided to schedule this year's Macau Elderly Sports Day next month, a few months earlier than normal, as the Macau segment of the upcoming 15th National Games will be held in the second half of this year, adding that the measure aims to enable the local government to focus on its organisation and preparation during the second half of the year for the games.

Chao also noted that the elderly sports day aims to raise senior citizens' awareness of the importance of doing exercise and to encourage them to discover fun in exercising.

Chao also said that next month's elderly sports day will feature elements of the upcoming 15th National Games, to allow more residents to know more about the event. ■

UM opens applications for 2025 BOC Trophy UltiMater Entrepreneur Competition

Adrian Vallesteros

The public University of Macau (UM) has announced in a recent statement the start of the application process for the Bank of China (BOC) Trophy UltiMater Entrepreneur Competition.

The statement noted that the competition, organised by UM's Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE), invites students currently enrolled in local higher education institutions, as well as Macau residents studying abroad, to participate in teams.

The statement added that the total prize pool for the competition exceeds 110,000 patacas. The top three teams, along with the winners of the Outstanding Prizes, will gain access to incubation services valued at over 150,000 patacas at the CIE. The competition is sponsored by the Bank of China Macau Branch.

The statement emphasised that the primary objective of the competition is to uncover promising technology and innovation projects across various fields, including big data, artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, smart manufacturing, new materials, fintech, biomedicine, and sustainable development. The statement also said that professionals will evaluate the feasibility of the business plans presented by the student teams, "thus paving the way for future entrepreneurial ambitions". Furthermore, the



This poster recently provided by UM shows the details of the Bank of China Trophy UltiMater Entrepreneur Competition.

statement elaborated on how the initiative aims to enhance the commercialisation of university research findings and foster connections between academic institutions and industries, investors, government bodies, and community organisations. The effort is intended to boost business and market support, thereby increasing conversion rates* and creating a "vibrant ecosystem" for innovation and research.

The statement noted that the CIE will offer a comprehensive suite of incubation services to the winning teams, which includes office space, professional mentoring, entrepreneurship training programmes, and opportunities to visit prominent enterprises in mainland China. Additionally, the CIE plans to recommend

successful participants for the 'Funding Scheme for Innovation and Research of Enterprises—Matching Projects', initiated by the Science and Technology Development Fund (FDCT), to further assist in executing their business plans.

Students who meet the eligibility criteria and wish to participate in the competition can submit their applications until April 28 at <https://go.um.edu.mo/ty70blff>. For more information, please visit: <https://cie.ici.um.edu.mo/news/2025-ultimater-cp/>. ■

*Conversion rate refers to the percentage of users who complete a desired action out of the total number of visitors or participants. It is a key metric in marketing, sales, and e-commerce to measure effectiveness. — DeepSeek

Illegal currency exchange dealer nabbed for fraud & money laundering

Yuki Lei

The Judiciary Police (PJ) announced yesterday the arrest of an illegal currency exchange dealer from the mainland in connection with a fraud and money laundering case involving HK\$120,000.

According to PJ spokesman Chao Teng Hin, the Judiciary Police receive a report from a middle-aged man on March 3, saying that his bank account was frozen by the mainland police after he exchanged the Hong Kong dollars that he had won at a local casino into yuan with the assistance

of the currency exchange dealer last month, resulting in a total loss of HK\$120,000.

The Judiciary Police identified the suspect as a 27-year-old man surnamed Li. Chao noted that the Judiciary Police, with the assistance of the Public Security Police, arrested Li on Wednesday night when he was about to leave Macau via the Barrier Gate checkpoint.

Chao quoted the mainland victim as noting that the suspect had exchanged HK\$120,000 into 111,600 yuan in his hotel

guestroom on February 19, adding that he received a notification from his bank the next day that his account had been frozen for receiving fraudulently obtained money.

According to Chao, under questioning, Li refused to cooperate with the police. He has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) after confirmation by the PJ investigation to have engaged in illegal currency exchange activities, fraud involving a considerable amount of money, and money laundering. ■



Sports Bureau's (ID) Sports Development Department chief Chao Kuok Wai (centre) addresses yesterday's press conference, flanked by Hong Wai Tong (from left to right), who heads Kai Fong's Sports Committee, Gung Luen Vice President Ella Lei Cheng I, Macau Elderly Sports Association President Leong Chong Leng, and Fu Luen Vice President Hoi Lok Man. — Photo: Tony Wong

STOCK MARKETS

Hang Seng Index closes 2.23 pct lower

HONG KONG — Hong Kong stock market ended lower yesterday with the benchmark Hang Seng Index down 2.23 percent to close at 24,219.95 points. The Hang Seng China Enterprises Index fell 2.33 percent to end at 8,950.18 points, while the Hang Seng Tech Index fell 3.39 percent to end at 5,836.28 points. — Xinhua

Temporary e-travel pass available for Macau residents with urgent travel needs

Continued from p.1

According to the announcement, the e-travel pass measure has been implemented in response to the growing number of residents from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan travelling to the mainland for business, study, work, and living, reflecting the increasingly close

exchanges between the regions and the mainland.

The NIA also stated that its next step will be to address the evolving needs of residents from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan by enhancing immigration policies and providing the residents with inclusive, convenient, intelligent, and

accurate services to support their lives and development in mainland China, with a view to proactively aiding Hong Kong and Macau in better integrating themselves into the broader context of the nation's development, while promoting the integration of development across the nation and Taiwan. ■

Govt sets up group to 'fundamentally' minimise roadworks' impact on residents

Tony Wong

The government has set up a new working group aiming to "fundamentally" minimise the adverse impact of roadworks on residents by improving its cross-departmental coordination of roadwork projects, chaired by Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raymond Tam Vai Man, who convened its first meeting earlier this week.

According to a statement by Tam's office on Tuesday, Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai decided to set up the working group on Monday last week, after which the group held its first meeting on Tuesday this week.

The statement said that the newly established working group, officially known as Working Group for Optimising the Coordination of Roadwork Projects, is tasked with reviewing the operation of the government's current mechanisms for coordinating the city's roadwork projects and making the necessary improvements to the mechanism.

The working group comprises officials from various public entities.

Chairing the meeting, according



Workers carry out roadworks in a section of Rua do Almirante Sérgio (河邊新街) in the Inner Harbour district on Wednesday. — Photo: Yuki Lei

to the statement, Tam ordered the members of the working group to "strengthen interdepartmental communication and coordination, improve the supervision mechanism, adopt a forward-looking approach, plan roadwork projects and make the necessary preparations in advance, and effectively monitor projects' quality and duration".

Tam said that the working

group is tasked with improving and streamlining the administrative procedures for entities involved in roadwork projects in terms of different aspects such as applications, coordination and approval processes.

During the meeting, according to the statement, Tam raised five main directions that the working group must comply with for its task of improving the coordination of

roadwork projects.

Firstly, Tam said that the working group must plan roadwork projects with a forward-looking approach and reserve space for the installation of underground pipes and cables, with the aim of avoiding repeated excavations.

Secondly, Tam ordered the working group to rigorously assess roadwork projects' duration proposed by the respective entities based on pragmatic principles, with the aim of minimising the projects' duration.

Thirdly, Tam said that the working group must encourage the applications of new equipment, new materials, and new techniques.

Fourthly, Tam ordered the working group to review and streamline the government's administrative procedures for assessing and approving applications for roadwork projects.

Fifthly, Tam said that the working group must strengthen promotional campaigns and improve the transparency of roadwork projects, with the aim of enabling residents to gain a better understanding of the projects'

details and their necessity.

Community representatives and commentators have long complained that Macau is virtually constantly being affected by repetitive roadworks, referring to a situation where roadworks are started again after only a relatively short period of time when the road had been dug up on the same section.

One of the main reasons causing the woes, the community representatives have said, is the government's widely perceived poor cross-departmental coordination of different roadwork projects needed to install underground pipes and cables run by different public utilities.

The establishment of the new working group for improving the coordination of roadwork projects last week came after Sam set up five leadership, coordination, or working groups last month aiming to advance the development of the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, the local government's public administrative reform, as well as improvements in Macau's legal system and in its urban and municipal facilities. ■

Man tries to smuggle 72 hermit crabs from Macau to mainland

Staff Reporter

Gongbei customs announced in a statement yesterday that a man attempted to smuggle 72 *Coenobita perlatus*, a type of hermit crab, from Macau to the mainland via the Gongbei checkpoint earlier this month.

The statement identified the man as a mainlander surnamed Tan.

According to the statement, the man, who was entering the mainland through "the nothing to declare"

channel on March 4, "deliberately" covered his shopping bag with his clothing.

Finding his demeanour suspicious, the statement said, customs officers intercepted him and seized 72 live crabs from his shopping bag.

Yesterday's statement said that after technical assessments, Gongbei customs has confirmed that the crabs are all *Coenobita perlatus*. ■



This undated handout photo released by Gongbei customs yesterday shows the seized hermit crabs.

HK, Macao, overseas compatriots commemorate 20th anniversary of Anti-Secession Law

BEIJING – Through a variety of events, compatriots from Hong Kong, Macao and overseas recently commemorated the 20th anniversary of the enforcement of China's Anti-Secession Law.

They commended the significance of the law in deterring separatist activities aimed at "Taiwan independence," stemming external interference, safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and ensuring peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Two decades ago, China's top legislature voted to adopt the Anti-Secession Law. To mark the law's enforcement since then, a symposium was held earlier this month in Beijing, stressing firm action against "Taiwan independence" separatist activities and foreign interference.

Echoing the message sent during the Beijing symposium, Yiu Chi-shing, president of the Hong Kong Association for Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China, said in a seminar on March 15 that no individual

or force can stop the invincible trend of China's reunification.

Attendees of the seminar, held by the association to mark the 20th anniversary of the Anti-Secession Law, unanimously stressed the need to understand the significant role of the law, to promote cross-Straits exchanges and cooperation, and to advance the reunification of the motherland.

On March 16, a Macau-based organization for promoting China's peaceful reunification also held a seminar to mark the anniversary.

Over the past 20 years, the legal framework for punishing "Taiwan independence" separatist activities has been further refined, while systems and policies in furtherance of Taiwan compatriots' well-being have been improved, according to the seminar.

Focusing on the same theme, the Alliance for China's Peaceful Reunification, USA, recently held a seminar and issued a joint statement.

The implementation of the law over the past two decades has formed a widely accepted consensus in the

international community that red lines on the Taiwan question shall not be crossed, the statement said.

From this anniversary forward, overseas Chinese in the United States will continue to make contributions to China's cause of national reunification and rejuvenation, according to the statement.

On March 15, the All Africa Association for Peaceful Reunification of China issued a joint statement that hails the significance of the law and condemns the separatist forces seeking "Taiwan independence" and the external forces supporting them.

Overseas Chinese compatriots in France, Spain, Serbia, Germany, Australia, Japan, Canada, Indonesia and other countries also joined in the commemoration, voicing the common aspiration of Chinese both at home and abroad to oppose "Taiwan independence" and foreign interference and to advance the great cause of national reunification.

— Xinhua

Li stresses need for stable foreign trade, high-level opening-up

XIAMEN – Premier Li Qiang has called for the stabilization of foreign trade with a pioneering and innovative spirit, and for the accelerated creation of new strengths in high-level opening-up.

Li, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, made the remarks during his inspection tour of Fujian Province between Tuesday and yesterday.

When visiting sportswear manufacturer ANTA in Quanzhou, he stressed the need to make greater efforts in research and development input, in brand building, and in winning market favor with better products.

At the Jinjiang dry port, the premier stressed the importance of improving the full-chain service functions of land ports, and of providing more robust support for

foreign trade enterprises.

During his tour of Taikoo (Xiamen) Aircraft Engineering Company Limited, Li said that China will expand the opening-up of its services sector, leverage the role of free trade pilot zones, create a more favorable business environment, and provide improved support for foreign-invested enterprises.

At a symposium held during the inspection tour, Li called for unswerving efforts to expand opening-up, for the vigorous development of diversified markets, and for active innovation in trade channels and approaches.

Noting that private enterprises are China's primary foreign trade entities, Li said governments at all levels must strive to provide improved policy support and a better development environment for private businesses. — Xinhua



Premier Li Qiang (center), also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, visits Taikoo (Xiamen) Aircraft Engineering Company Limited in Xiamen, Fujian Province, on Wednesday. Li paid an inspection visit to Fujian Province between Tuesday and yesterday. — Xinhua