

Trump vows to declare national emergency, use military at Mexico border

WASHINGTON, DC – Donald Trump will issue a raft of executive orders aimed at reshaping how the United States deals with citizenship and immigration, he said yesterday minutes after his inauguration.

The 47th president will set to work almost immediately with a series of presidential decrees intended to drastically reduce the number of migrants entering the country.

“First, I will declare a national emergency at our southern border,” Trump said.

“All illegal entry will immediately be halted, and we will begin the process of returning millions and millions of criminal aliens back to the places from which they came.

“I will send troops to the southern border to repel the disastrous invasion of our country,” he said.

Trump, who campaigned on a platform of clamping down on migration also intends to put an end to the centuries-old practice of granting citizenship automatically to anyone born in the United States.

Many of Trump’s executive actions taken during his first term were rescinded under Joe Biden, including one using so-called Title 42, which was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic preventing almost all entry to the country on public health grounds.

The changes under Biden led to an influx of people crossing into the United States, and images of thousands of people packing the border area.

Trump and his allies characterised this as Biden’s “open border” policy, and spoke regularly of an “invasion.”

US policy will recognise ‘only two genders’

Meanwhile, Trump said in his inauguration speech yesterday that his government’s official policy would only recognise two genders, ending the current practice of providing a third gender option in some settings.

“I will also end the government policy of trying to socially engineer race and gender into every aspect of public and private life... As of today, it will henceforth be the official policy of the United States government that there are only two genders, male and female,” he said.

US will ‘plant the Stars and Stripes’ on Mars

Trump also vowed that the world’s biggest economy would again see itself as “a growing



US President Donald Trump delivers his inaugural address after being sworn in as the 47th president of the United States in the Rotunda of the US Capitol yesterday in Washington, DC.

– AFP

nation” that expands its territory, adding that the country would plant its flag on Mars.

“We will pursue our manifest destiny into the stars, launching American astronauts to plant the Stars and Stripes on the planet Mars,” he said in his inauguration speech at the US Capitol in Washington.

US ‘taking back’ Panama Canal

Trump also vowed in his inauguration address that the United States would be “taking back” the Panama Canal, alleging that China had gained control of the waterway.

“We didn’t give it to China, we gave it to Panama. And we’re taking it back,” said Trump, who has previously not ruled out using military force against Panama.

Trump vows to ‘overhaul trade system’

Trump also vowed to overhaul the United States’ trade system, promising tariffs and

taxes on other countries in his inaugural address after being sworn in as the 47th US president.

“I will immediately begin the overhaul of our trade system to protect American workers and families,” he said.

“Instead of taxing our citizens to enrich other countries, we will tariff and tax foreign countries to enrich our citizens,” Trump added.

Since his election victory in November, Trump has taken aim at allies and adversaries alike, raising the prospect of fresh tariffs to push other countries towards tougher action on US concerns.

Before his White House return, Trump vowed to impose 25 percent tariffs on Canadian and Mexican imports, and an additional 10 percent on Chinese goods, if those three countries did not do more about illegal immigration and the flow of fentanyl into the United States.

On the campaign trail, Trump also floated

the idea of much steeper tariff rates on Chinese imports.

But Trump stopped short yesterday of unveiling new tariffs.

In his speech, he reiterated his plan to set up an “External Revenue Service” to collect tariffs, duties and revenues, alongside the establishment of a “Department of Government Efficiency” aiming to cut federal spending.

US ‘will withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord’

Trump’s administration announced yesterday the United States’ intention to withdraw from the Paris climate accord for a second time, marking a defiant rejection of global efforts to combat planetary warming as catastrophic weather events intensify worldwide.

“President Trump will withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord,” the White House said in a statement shortly after the Republican was sworn into office. (More on pages 10 & 11) – AFP

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Xi extends Spring Festival greetings to non-CPC personages

Xi Jinping yesterday extended festive greetings to people from non-CPC political parties and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, personages without party affiliation, and other members of the united front ahead of the Spring Festival. – Story on p. 7

Israelis want Trump to ‘make Israel normal again’

For many Israelis yearning for a future free from war and for the release of hostages still held in Gaza, US President-elect Donald Trump’s return to the White House yesterday is a source of hope. – Story on p. 10

Spain’s PM urges Europe to resist ‘caste’ controlling social media

Spain’s left-wing Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez yesterday urged Europe to resist a tech “caste” trying to control Western governments and public debate through social media. – Story on p. 12

Student on zebra crossing run over by bus in Iao Hon

Yuki Lei

A 19-year-old secondary school student was rushed to the public Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre yesterday after he was run over by a bus injuring his right leg while crossing a road in the northern district, in response to which the Public Security Police (PSP) said that the 60-year-old male driver was fined for failing to yield at a zebra crossing, while the Transport Bureau (DSAT) said that the driver had meanwhile been suspended from his duties.

The accident occurred at the junction of Rua da Tribuna (看台街) and Rua Direita do Hipódromo (中心街) at about 2 p.m. yesterday, involving a Transmac bus on the AP1 route and a male student in school uniform. According to the Public Security Police and Fire Services Bureau (CB), the victim was struck by the bus while walking across a zebra crossing, during which his right leg was run over by the bus's left front wheel, resulting in an open fracture of the right thigh and a right metatarsal laceration*. The victim was losing consciousness when he was admitted to the hospital. The Public Security Police confirmed with the *Post* yesterday evening that the victim remained hospitalised.

According to the Public Security Police, a breathalyser test conducted on the driver showed that his alcohol concentration was zero grams of alcohol per litre of blood.

Regarding the accident, the bus operator noted in a statement that



This photo circulating on social media platforms shows the 19-year-old student being run over by a Transmac bus in yesterday's accident on a zebra crossing in Iao Hon district.

the bus driver had started working for Transmac in early 2012 and had been assigned to drive the AP1 route for a long period of time, adding that the driver had undergone a medical check-up last month, whose report specified that he was physically able to continue to drive a bus.

As far as the vehicle in question is concerned, the bus operator

stated that the bus had undergone routine inspection and maintenance early this month and was in normal technical condition.

DSAT expresses concern, sadness

About two hours after the tragedy, the Transport Bureau issued a statement expressing

“great” concern over the incident and its “profound” sadness to the victim, underlining that it has ordered the bus operator to submit a detailed report on the incident, while stepping up safety training and reminders to its bus drivers.

The bureau also stated that it “is continuously reviewing and optimising the city’s zebra crossing facilities”, in particular at busy traffic spots, adding that traffic lights have been installed wherever possible and conditions permit.

Zebra crossings should be designed ‘scientifically’: commentator

As yesterday’s accident was not the first of its kind that has occurred in Iao Hon district, the *Post* interviewed yesterday Ku Heng Cheong, a member of the government-appointed Transport Advisory Committee, about the design of Macau’s zebra crossings.

In 2021, a similar incident happened in Iao Hon district when two school children were knocked down by a bus on a zebra crossing, with one of them caught under the bus, but both sustained only minor injuries in the accident.

Speaking to the *Post* via WhatsApp yesterday, Ku quoted the bureau as revealing at a meeting with the Transport Advisory Committee that the setting up of zebra crossings in Macau is being carried out in reference to the experience of different regions, including the mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan,

according to which Macau’s zebra crossings are designed mainly in line with a number of principles for consideration, including the area’s pedestrian flow and pedestrians and drivers’ visibility conditions.

With a view to implementing the most effective zebra crossing marking patterns, he said, the bureau should take into full consideration scientific factors and make adjustments to ensure that the zebra crossings are well designed based on the different conditions in the city’s various districts, adding that apart from increasing the risk to motorists, setting up zebra crossings at junctions could at the same time aggravate the pressure on the area’s traffic flow. He urged the bureau to take into account other factors as well, including the pedestrian and traffic flows in different district, as well as road section design, with the aim of objectively assessing the different locations and conditions of setting up zebra crossings to ensure both pedestrian safety and smooth traffic flow.

Ku also said that while it was inevitable that drivers needed to develop good driving habits to avoid any traffic accidents, pedestrians should also pay close attention to their own safety instead of relying entirely on assuming that drivers are cautious all the time. ■

* A metatarsal laceration is a cut or tear in the skin and underlying tissues overlying one of the metatarsal bones in the foot. – *Poe*

2 local shops fall for fake order scam from ‘school’

William Chan

Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Chao Teng Hin said in a regular press conference yesterday that the local owners of a retail shop and a hardware store have separately been defrauded by scammers claiming to be “school teachers”.

According to Chao, the owners received a call last week from someone claiming to be a “teacher” from a local school. The female retail shop owner later told the police that the “teacher” wanted to order servings of a traditional Chinese dish, known as “big bowl feast” (盤菜 – transliterated as “poon choi” in Cantonese). The “teacher” claimed that the “school” had a dispute with the “big bowl

feast supplier,” preventing them from placing the order directly. The “teacher” even asserted that the meals were intended for charity, and the victim could earn 350 patacas per order.

In the other case, the “teacher” told the male hardware store owner that the school wanted to order tins of emulsion paint to send to nursing homes, and the owner could earn 600 patacas per tin.

The owners accepted the orders and paid the respective “suppliers” HK\$45,000 and HK\$20,000 after receiving bank transfer receipts from the “teachers”. Afterward, the owners lost contact with the “teachers” and discovered that the receipts were bogus. ■

Banned driver uses phone while driving: police

Ada Lei

A local man banned from driving was arrested on Thursday for disobedience after being caught using a phone while driving, Public Security Police (PSP) spokeswoman Cheong Im Sim said at a regular press conference yesterday.

The suspect surnamed Lao is in his forties. He told the police that he’s jobless.

According to Cheong, on Thursday afternoon a police officer on patrol in Rua de Corte Real (噶地利亞街) saw Lao using a phone while driving. The officer promptly intercepted him and upon checking the records, he discovered that Lao has been banned for speeding from July 30 last year to February 28 this year.

Under questioning, Lao confessed to being in violation of his driving ban.

Lao has been transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), facing a disobedience charge, according to Cheong. ■



Public Security Police (PSP) spokeswoman Cheong Im Sim looks on during yesterday's regular press conference yesterday. – Photo: Ada Lei

17 fall for concert ticket scams last week

William Chan

Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Chao Teng Hin said in a regular press conference yesterday that 17 people have fallen victim to concert ticket scams in the past week.

The victims, comprising two males and 15 females, include four local residents and 13 mainland Chinese, 14 of them under the age of 30.

According to Chao, the fraudsters offered concert tickets to the victims on social media, with some even pretending to be staff members of the events to make the victims trust them. Some scammers even provided the victims with a phishing website and instructed them to transfer the payment. Once the money was sent, the victims lost contact with the fraudsters.

In total, the 17 victims lost 112,330 yuan (123,290 patacas), with the largest individual loss amounting to 26,360 yuan. ■



Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesman Chao Teng Hin looks on during yesterday's regular press conference. – Photo: William Chan

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14°C~21°C

Source: SMG

Police warn public of mCoin redemption phishing scams

Ginnie Liang

The Judiciary Police (PJ) warned the public of MPay phishing SMS scams in a statement yesterday, in which residents are asked to click on



This image provided by the Judiciary Police (PJ) yesterday warns residents of the recent MPay phishing SMS scam.

a link to redeem gifts with their MPay points and an additional payment that requires one's credit card information.

The statement said that this kind of scam exploits victims through fake MPay SMS messages containing phishing links, where victims are informed that their MPay points – known as mCoin – are about to expire, and they could redeem gifts by paying a small amount of money using their credit card.

The statement said that such kind of SMS seems believable because the person's real mCoins in Mpay may also about to expire.

However, once victims enter their credit card details, the fraudsters exploit the information, resulting in a financial loss, the statement said.

Members of the public should

always use the authentic MPay app when carrying out any MPay gift redemption or transaction, adding that MPay will never request any bank or personal information on any website, the statement said, adding that suspected fraud should immediately be reported to the Judiciary Police's Anti-Fraud Enquiry hotline on 8800 7777 or the crime report hotline at 993 for assistance.

According to the official website of MPay, developed by Macau Pass, MPay is the leading mobile payment e-wallet in Macau. It allows users to link multiple bank accounts or credit cards to their e-wallet account. MPay offers a wide array of features, such as online and offline payments, P2P transfers, payment of telecom and utility bills, online ticketing, MPark services, and a transport QR Code for bus fares. ■

IC to hold CNY celebratory events in local community



Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) President Leong Wai Man (right) and Cultural Development Advisory Committee member Ieng Weng Fat looks on during a press briefing after the government-appointed committee's regular closed-door meeting at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM) yesterday. – Photo: Yuki Lei

Yuki Lei

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) announced yesterday that it will hold a raft of Chinese New Year (CNY) celebratory events including performances, workshops and exhibitions at various Macau's UNESCO World Heritage sites, cultural venues and the city's six revitalisation districts, with special emphasis on folkloric performances and booths from Hebei and Guizhou provinces in various local communities on January 29-31, i.e., from the first to the third CNY day.

The announcement was made by IC President Deland Leong Wai Man during yesterday's press briefing about the government-appointed Cultural Development Committee's closed-door meeting at the Macau Cultural Centre (CCM).

Leong said she expected the string of events to strengthen local business connections, thereby driving the development of the community's cultural economy, while further deepening Macau's role as a "base for exchange and cooperation where Chinese culture is the mainstream and diverse cultures coexist".

According to Leong, unlike in the past, this year's events will, in particular, focus on local neighbourhoods, such as Taipa's city centre, as well as the peninsula's Rotunda de Carlos da Maia (三盞燈 – popularly known as Three Lamps in Chinese) and Anim'Arte Nam Van, with the aim of making culture the new driving force of Macau's economy.

According to a statement by the bureau last night, a variety of folk dances, instrumental music and acrobatic performances by troupes from Hebei and Guizhou will take place at the Three Lamps area, the Mount Fortress, Largo do Barra in front of A-Ma Temple, at the Lok Yeung Fa Yuen Building sitting-out area in Fai Chi Kei district, the open-air venue next to Flower City Garden in Taipa, and Largo Eduardo Marques in Coloane. "Largo" is Portuguese for "square". ■

SJM Resorts, Melco raise staff wages

Rui Pastorin

SJM Resorts and Melco Resorts and Entertainment said in separate statements last night that their eligible staff will be receiving salary increases, both effective from April 1.

SJM Resorts said that their salary increment is set to benefit around 99 percent of the integrated resort operator's workforce, adding that staff earning a monthly salary of 16,000 patacas or below will receive a salary increase of 600 patacas, while eligible staff earning over 16,000 patacas will receive a 2.5 percent salary increment.

The statement quoted SJM Managing Director Daisy Ho Chiu-fung as saying, "SJM progressed steadily throughout 2024. We deeply appreciate the dedication and hard work of our team members and are pleased to announce a salary increase for all eligible employees".

Ho added: "As we step into the new year, SJM will continue working hand in hand with our team to pursue high-quality development, achieve new milestones across various domains, support Macau's appropriate economic diversification, and create value for the community."

Meanwhile, Melco Resorts &



This photo recently provided by SJM Resorts shows Grand Lisboa and Hotel Lisboa next to each other on the peninsula.



This photo recently provided by Melco Resorts & Entertainment shows its City of Dreams complex in Cotai.

Entertainment announced in their statement that its eligible non-management staff in Macau and Hong Kong will be receiving a wage hike.

According to the statement, eligible full-time non-management staff earning a monthly base salary (including tips) of up to 16,000 patacas will receive a pay increase of 600 patacas per month, representing an increase ranging from 3.8 percent to 6.5 percent.

Eligible full-time non-management staff earning a monthly base salary (including tips) of over

16,000 patacas per month will get an increment of 2.5 percent.

Melco Resorts & Entertainment Chairman and CEO Lawrence Ho Yau Lung was quoted by the statement as saying: "We sincerely appreciate the dedication and continuous hard work of our colleagues. In recognition of their efforts, we are pleased to reward the team by sharing the profits to express our gratitude for their unwavering support. We look forward to reaching new heights together in the future." ■

WeChat Mini Programme challenge engages over 500 students in Macau

Ginnie Liang

The WeChat Mini Programme's Global Innovation Challenge Macau Region Competition was held yesterday, with around 30 schools and over 500 schoolchildren participating and 278 entries submitted, according to a statement released by the organiser yesterday.

The competition was held yesterday at Colégio Diocesano de São José (CDSJ) 5th Branch, displaying 16 finalists' work at the venue, with the aim of helping young people grow and connect with the nation's future through the enhancement of their artificial intelligence (AI) skills and the cultivation of their creativity.

The two entries with the highest overall scores, "Garbage Classification Game" from CDSJ 5th Branch and "Intelligent Interactive Recipes for Intangible Classics" from Hou Kong Middle School qualified for the Global Finals, the statement said.

The competition was launched on January 6, and applicants submitted their works in four categories,

namely Primary 1-3, Primary 4-6, Secondary 1-3 and Secondary 4-6, according to their respective interests, the statement said, adding that the jury selected 171 winning entries based on completeness, creativity, feasibility, advancement and scalability.

Tencent Vice President of Public Affairs Li Tsz-shu said that this year's competition in Macau was full of surprises and creativity, with students showing many innovative ideas on social issues such as helping the elderly and accessibility, the statement said, adding that in the future, Tencent will continue to help students work with technology and AI to solve practical problems in civil society, in order to promote Macau's diversified economic development, and to cultivate more talents for the future.

According to the statement, the WeChat team will continue to explore how to integrate technology with education to help teachers and students teach and learn more easily, adding that currently more than 1,000 schools are using the WeChat Mini Programme's education platform. ■



This handout photo provided by the organiser of the WeChat Mini Programme Global Innovation Challenge Macau Region Competition yesterday shows the two winning teams that will enter the Global Finals.



Crystal Chan displays 17 acrylics at ‘Subtropical Romance’

Rui Pastorin

Local artist Crystal Wai Man Chan is presenting her emotional connection and fascination with travel through 17 acrylics at an ongoing exhibition titled “Subtropical Romance” at the Taipa Village Art Space.

Featuring scenes of tropical plants, fruits, places, along with paintings of people, exhibitiongoers may view the works at the free-admission art space until February 8.

On the creation of Chan’s works for her latest exhibition, a statement by the Taipa Village Cultural Association, the organiser of the event, said that the works have been inspired by “the romance associated with the tropics”. It explores a story that tourists tell others upon returning from their travels featuring distant beaches, exotic fruits and palm trees.

“These stories turn into fantasies and fictions that we tell ourselves about the good life”, Chan noted in a statement displayed at the gallery.

“Growing up in Macau, I never thought of it as part of that story but now an endless stream of tourists come to town to escape from familiar things and find paradise in an unfamiliar place”, the artist added.

Chan has lived in other places besides Macau, having studied and worked in China’s Taiwan region, Greece and New York, where she earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the School of Visual Arts and her Master of Fine Arts degree at Purchase College, State University of New York.

She has taken part in various group exhibitions, as well as solo and two-person exhibitions, in Macau and the US among other places, her website notes. Aside from painting, Chan is also engaged in the creation of sound installations, while “affect” and atmosphere are the two main elements in her artworks.

Those interested in viewing Chan’s latest exhibition may visit the free-admission gallery from 12 noon to 8 p.m. daily, while more details on both the exhibition and artist are also available on <https://www.taipavillagemacau.com/>



Photos: Rui Pastorin



Macau to face 'extremely cold' weather early next week: observatory

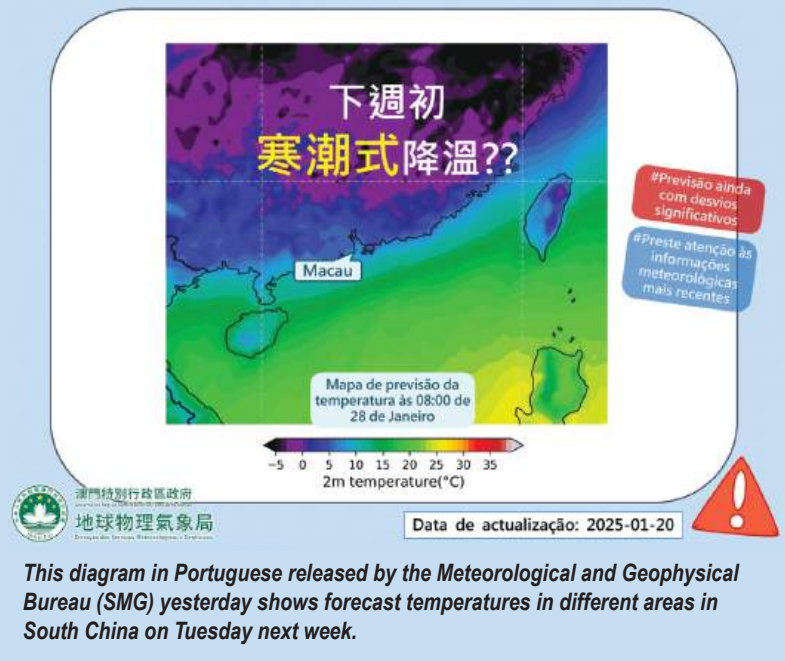
Tony Wong

The Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) said in a statement yesterday that, based on its latest meteorological data, it forecasts that a strong winter monsoon would arrive in South China early next week when Macau's temperature would significantly drop.

However, the statement was quick to add that the intensity, scope of influence, and arrival time of the cold air was still subject to possibly significant

changes over the next seven days. Consequently, the statement said, it was now still "too early" to say whether Macau would be affected by "extremely cold" weather early next week.

In addition, the statement also said that the bureau forecasts that Macau will be affected by an easterly airflow later this week because of which cloud cover would increase, adding that the city was forecast to be affected by light rain from tomorrow to Friday. ■



Regulations for volunteer activities cannot be driven by legislation: IAS

Ginnie Liang

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) has said in a statement recently that it is necessary to consider in depth the modes and mechanisms of regulations for volunteer activities, but stressed that legislative regulations might impede the growth of volunteer services, particularly those driven by community interests.

The bureau made the remarks in a reply to a written interpellation submitted by lawmaker-cum-civic leader Ho Ion Sang last month, the reply of which was sent to the media yesterday.

Ho pointed out that in recent years, various public and private entities have been actively promoting volunteer participation in a wide range of community initiatives, spanning different fields and involving organisations with various backgrounds.

Ho said he hopes that the future government will enhance policies and legal frameworks to further develop the volunteer service system, ensuring a healthy and orderly environment for volunteer work while maximising the impact of relevant volunteer organizations.

The Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) added its own remark to the reply,

highlighting its ongoing efforts to encourage young students to engage in volunteer work through initiatives at the government, school, and community levels, adding that since the 2012/2013 academic year, the DSEDJ has implemented volunteer programmes targeting secondary school students, which have recently expanded to include tertiary education students, while community project activities for volunteers have been introduced as well.

To further support these initiatives, the DSEDJ said it has established a youth volunteer and community organisation human resources database and continues to promote a youth volunteer reward programme. ■



This undated handout photo provided by lawmaker-cum-civic leader Ho Ion Sang shows him posing in front of the Legislative Assembly building in Sai Van.

Govt vows to study adopting latest biometric technologies at border checkpoints

Tony Wong

The Macau government has announced that it will study the possibility of adopting the latest biometric technologies in e-channels at the Macau-mainland joint checkpoints where the "joint inspection and one-time release" system is operating.

The Office of Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak referred to the issue in a reply to a written interpellation made by directly-elected lawmaker-cum-unionist Leong Sun Iok in November. The office made and signed the reply last month, copies of which were released by Leong's office to the media on Saturday.

The "joint inspection and one-time release" model is a joint Macau-mainland immigration clearance system adopted at Macau-mainland joint checkpoints where border crossers are required to pass border controls only once when completing their departure and arrival formalities.

Currently, three of Macau's land border checkpoints with Zhuhai are Macau-mainland joint checkpoints, namely the Macau-Zhuhai checkpoint of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HZMB), the Hengqin checkpoint, and the Qingmao pedestrian border checkpoint.

Macau's busiest land border checkpoint, the Barrier Gate checkpoint, is not a Macau-mainland joint checkpoint. After border crossers en route to the mainland complete their departure formalities at the Barrier Gate checkpoint, they are required to pass through an area before entering Zhuhai's Gongbei checkpoint where they need to complete their arrival formalities.

Macau's immigration service is run by the Public Security Police (PSP).

At the three Macau-mainland joint checkpoints, border crossers can choose to use traditional manual inspection counters. After border crossers en route to the mainland present their ID documents at the Macau-side immigration counters to complete their departure formalities, they immediately pass the mainland-side counter where they present their ID documents to complete their arrival formalities.

Border crossers can also choose to use e-channels at the three Macau-mainland joint checkpoints, where border crossers en route to the mainland are only required to have their ID documents needed to enter the mainland scanned, without having to present their ID documents needed for leaving Macau.

However, in addition to fingerprint scans, border crossers are also required to pass facial recognition when using the Macau-mainland joint checkpoints' e-channels.

Likewise, border crossers en route to Macau are only required



This undated handout photo released by the Public Security Police (PSP) early this month shows a border crosser passing an e-channel with the assistance of a PSP officer when entering Macau in the Qingmao checkpoint.

to have their ID documents for entering Macau scanned when using the Macau-mainland joint checkpoints' e-channels.

Fingerprint & facial recognition

In his written interpellation, Leong said that many local residents told him that when passing through the Qingmao checkpoint, it was difficult to have their fingerprints successfully recognised by e-channels so that they ended up only being able to complete their departure and arrival formalities with the assistance of immigration officers.

Leong also said that some border crossers even licked their fingers and put them on the scanner again after the e-channel could not recognise their fingerprints.

According to Leong's written interpellation, some residents also told him that it was also difficult to pass through facial recognition at the Qingmao checkpoint's e-channels.

Leong asked the government whether it has identified the causes that made it difficult for some border crossers to pass finger scans or facial recognition at the Qingmao checkpoint's e-channels and whether it was planning any measures to fix the problem.

Leong also asked the government whether it will plan to upgrade the technology installed for e-channels at Macau-mainland joint checkpoints.

In its reply to Leong's written interpellation, Wong's office said that some border crossers could not have their fingerprints successfully read by the scanners possibly due to their fingerprints being affected by wear or dryness. Consequently, checkpoint staff have prepared moisture sprays for border crossers for their fingers making it easier for them to pass e-channels, the office said.

The office also pledged in the reply that the Public Security Police (PSP), in collaboration with the Macau Public Security Forces Affairs Bureau (DSFSM), will constantly improve border-crossing IT systems and equipment. In

addition, the police will pay close attention to the latest development in biometric technology worldwide and study the possibility of adopting new technologies in border-crossing facilities.

No iris recognition at Macau-mainland joint checkpoints

Meanwhile, Leong's written interpellation also asked the government whether it will study the possibility of adopting iris recognition at the Macau-mainland joint checkpoints' e-channels, like other checkpoints in general.

After a trial operation, 10 e-channels equipped with iris recognition officially came into use at the Barrier Gate checkpoint in October 2023.

The office's reply to Leong's written interpellation noted that following the installation of the first 10 channels at the Barrier Gate checkpoint, in 2024 the police installed their iris recognition system at 71 additional e-channels, at the Barrier Gate checkpoint, the Macau-Hong Kong checkpoint of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HZMB), the airport, the Taipa Ferry Terminal, the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal, and the Inner Harbour Ferry Terminal.

Consequently, the reply said, there are currently 81 e-channels equipped with iris recognition in border checkpoints in Macau.

At e-channels equipped with iris recognition, travellers can choose to use fingerprint recognition or iris recognition when completing their departure or arrival formalities.

However, only Macau residents can register to use iris recognition.

Concerning the possibility of adopting iris recognition at the Macau-mainland joint checkpoints' e-channels, the reply underlined that the matter would involve the mainland's legal matters. Consequently, the office said, for the time being iris recognition still cannot be adopted in the Macau-mainland joint checkpoints because the matter would require an in-depth study involving both sides. ■