

SDEV visits North District (with photos)

The Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, visited North District today (January 25) and met with local District Council members to exchange views on district matters. He also visited the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (HKFYG) Leadership Institute.

Accompanied by the District Officer (North), Mr Chong Wing-wun, Mr Wong first met with the Chairman of the North District Council, Mr So Sai-chi, and local District Council members to gain a better understanding of the latest developments and needs of the district, and listen to members' views and suggestions on the work of the Government.

He then proceeded to the HKFYG Leadership Institute. Located at the Former Fanling Magistracy, the institute is one of the projects under Batch III of the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme. It comprises five schools and provides leadership training to young people with a view to enhancing their communication skills, perspectives and social responsibilities.

Mr Wong toured the facilities of the institute, such as former courtrooms and prison cells which have been converted into meeting rooms and multi-function rooms, as well as the accommodation lodge. He was briefed by young cultural ambassadors on the history and architectural merits of the old magistracy, and details of the restoration and revitalisation of this Grade 3 historic building.

The HKFYG Leadership Institute was soft launched in December last year and will be officially opened in March this year.





One-off special arrangement of Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme to end on January 30

The Transport Department (TD) today (January 25) reminded members of the public that the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme has been implemented from January 1. Under the Scheme, only the public transport expenses paid starting from January 1 are included in the calculation of the monthly subsidy, and the expenses on designated transport tickets are calculated according to the date of purchase of the tickets. In other words, fares on designated transport tickets purchased from January 1 to 31 (regardless of the effective date of the designated transport tickets) are considered as part of the public transport expenses in January.

The TD also reminded members of the public to perform registration for designated transport tickets purchased by cash or any payment means other than Octopus within 30 days from the date of purchase, in order to include the relevant fares in the public transport expenses of that month for subsidy calculation. Each designated transport ticket only has to be registered once. For instance, commuters purchasing designated transport tickets on January 1 are required to perform registration on or before January 30, such that the expense can be included for the calculation of the subsidy in January. Commuters can check the registration status of the designated monthly tickets two days after the date of registration through the website of the Scheme (www.ptfss.gov.hk), the Octopus App and the hotline of the Scheme (2969 5500).

In consideration of monthly tickets of public transport services generally being sold before the effective date of the tickets, the Government has introduced a one-off special arrangement in the first month after the implementation of the Scheme. Commuters who purchased designated monthly tickets, which are designated for use in January 2019, in December 2018

should perform registration on or before January 30, 2019, at the Designated Transport Ticket Self-registration Points or through the staff of operators, in order to include the above expenses into the calculation of the total public transport expenses in January. Please note that this one-off arrangement is applicable to monthly passes – the use of which is restricted to the designated month. An MTR City Saver is valid for 40 days upon activation after the first journey and therefore the one-off special arrangement is not applicable to it. Details of the designated monthly tickets and their respective registration arrangements are listed in the Annex.

Commuters will be able to collect the public transport fare subsidy for January starting from February 16 by tapping their Octopus at the Subsidy Collection Points installed at MTR stations, Light Rail Customer Service Centres and designated ferry piers; at the Octopus readers at the cashier of any outlet of 7-Eleven, Circle-K and Wellcome supermarket; or at Octopus Service Points, or through the Octopus App. The subsidy will then be credited to the Octopus. Thereafter, on and after the 16th of each month, commuters can collect the subsidy of the previous month through the same channels. The subsidy for each month is valid for collection within the next three months.

Commuters may check their record of public transport expenses and subsidy amount through the website of the Scheme, the Octopus App and the hotline of the Scheme. For enquires about the details of the Scheme, please see the website of the Scheme or call 1823.

CHP investigates two cases of severe paediatric influenza A infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 25) investigating two cases of severe paediatric influenza A infection.

The first case involves a 15-year-old boy with underlying illnesses, who has presented with fever and malaise since January 22. He was admitted to Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) on January 23 and was transferred to QMH's paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) for further management yesterday. His nasopharyngeal aspirate (NPA) tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with severe pneumonia. He is now in a critical condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period. One of his home contacts had upper respiratory tract infection recently and had recovered. His other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The second case involves a four-year-old girl with underlying illnesses, who has presented with fever since yesterday. She was admitted to QMH on the same day and subsequently developed respiratory distress and was transferred to QMH's PICU for further management today. Her NPA tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with severe pneumonia. She is now in a critical condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

"The latest surveillance data indicated that the local seasonal influenza activity may continue to rise in the period ahead. We urge the community to continue heightening its vigilance against seasonal influenza. As young children are particularly affected in the influenza season, we appeal to parents who have not yet arranged vaccination for their children in this season to do so as soon as possible to strengthen their personal protection," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Apart from children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are also urged to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination. Medical advice should be sought promptly if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people," the spokesman added.

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccination as early as possible for personal protection, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses. For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).

[SCED urges WTO members to preserve a well-functioning WTO](#)

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, urged members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to preserve a well-functioning WTO by lifting the blockage to the Appellate Body appointment at the WTO Informal Ministerial Gathering in Davos, Switzerland, today (January

25, Davos time).

Held on the margins of the World Economic Forum, the Informal Ministerial Gathering provided an opportunity for participating ministers to discuss ways to advance the trade agenda and to preserve the relevance and credibility of the multilateral trading system, including ideas for reforming the WTO.

"That the WTO has imperfections to fix is no excuse to shut down its engine and grind its core functions to a halt," Mr Yau said.

"Hong Kong stands ready to discuss the WTO's imperfections, and appreciates the good intentions of all the WTO reform proposals for improving the dispute settlement mechanism," he said.

The dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO that keeps the multilateral trading system going will stall by the year's end if new Appellate Members are not appointed in the coming months.

Mr Yau added that attempts to negotiate new rules on e-commerce, domestic regulations and fisheries subsidies should move forward in parallel.

Before the Informal Ministerial Gathering, Mr Yau also attended the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Electronic Commerce in which participating ministers shared their views on the topic "How can WTO negotiations capture opportunities offered by electronic commerce for all WTO Members?"

He said it is important that the negotiations cover all essential elements for building a predictable and conducive e-commerce environment for global trade and the outcome should lead to a set of trade rules which give both suppliers and consumers the confidence they need to engage in and reap the benefits of e-commerce.

Mr Yau will return to Hong Kong tomorrow (January 26).

[Tung Chung Swimming Pool temporarily closed](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (January 25) that Tung Chung Swimming Pool in Islands District has been temporarily

closed for cleaning and superchlorination following the discovery of a small amount of vomit in the pool.

It will be reopened at 6.30am tomorrow.

The department appeals to swimmers to be considerate and to keep the swimming pools clean. They are advised not to swim after a full meal and should use the toilet facilities if necessary before swimming.