

WTO Members commend Hong Kong, China for its free trade regime

Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) commended Hong Kong, China (HKC) again for its free and open trade regime at the Trade Policy Review meeting successfully concluded in Geneva, Switzerland today (November 28, Geneva time).

Leading the HKC delegation, Director-General of Trade and Industry, Ms Salina Yan, shared her observation, "We are encouraged by WTO Members' commendation of our free and open trade policies as well as our unwavering support for the multilateral trading system. We are also pleased with Members' recognition of our continuous efforts in maintaining a liberal trade and investment regime, our achievements in trade facilitation and our strong engagement in various aspects of WTO work."

"Over the years, the rules-based multilateral trading system has proven to be crucial to the continued growth and sustainable development of Members' economies. As a founding Member of the WTO, HKC pitches strongly for this system, and will continue to play an active and constructive role in strengthening it. When global trade development is threatened by rising protectionism, HKC will join efforts with other Members to address challenges facing the WTO," Ms Yan said at the meeting.

The Discussant for the Trade Policy Review, Ambassador Alfredo Suescum of Panama, applauded HKC for its commitment to the multilateral trading system. He said, "Members clearly recognised that there has been palpable progress on many issues since the last review. Members also recognised that HKC remains a role model of openness and business friendliness." He praised the very active role played by HKC's Economic and Trade Office in Geneva.

In his concluding remarks, the Chairperson of the WTO Trade Policy Review Body, Ambassador Eloi Laourou of Benin, praised HKC for maintaining one of the most open and market-oriented economies in the world, and achieving robust economic growth, despite a challenging external environment. "HKC's liberal approach to trade and investment has enabled it to obtain some of the highest rankings in major world indicators of competitiveness, economic freedom and ease of doing business," he said, adding that "HKC has set an example through its staunch commitment to the free markets and the multilateral trading system."

The Review examined HKC's trade and investment regimes in detail, covering trade in both goods and services, as well as measures affecting business operations, including competition policy and the protection of intellectual property rights. It also gave an overview of its economic environment and deepening trade relationships with trading partners, including the expanding network of Free Trade Agreements and Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements.

The WTO Trade Policy Review Mechanism enhances the transparency and understanding of Members' trade policies and practices, thereby facilitating the smooth functioning of the multilateral trading system. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, using the name "Hong Kong, China" and being a separate customs territory as provided for under the Basic Law, is a founding member of the WTO, and is subject to regular Trade Policy Reviews. The last review took place in 2014.

[Murder in Sham Shui Po](#)

Police are investigating a murder case in Sham Shui Po this afternoon (November 28) in which a 40-year-old woman died.

At about 2.55pm, Police received a report from a 57-year-old man that his 40-year-old wife attempted to commit suicide inside a unit in Nam Lok House, Nam Shan Estate.

Police officers sped to the scene and found the 40-year-old woman lying unconsciously inside the unit. Sustaining injuries to her back, she was rushed to Caritas Medical Centre in unconscious state and was certified dead at 3.27pm.

Initial investigation revealed that the 57-year-old man suspected to have assaulted the deceased with a knife. He was arrested for murder, and is being detained for enquiries.

A knife in suspected connection with the case was seized at scene.

Post-mortem examinations will be conducted later to ascertain the cause of death of the deceased.

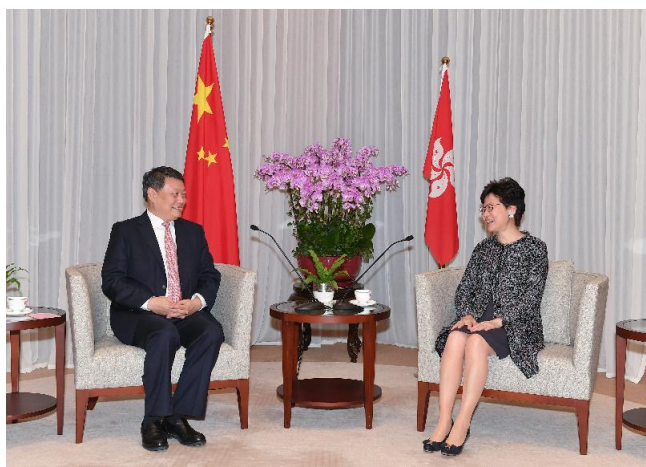
Investigation by the District Crime Squad of Sham Shui Po District is underway.

[CE meets Governor of Liaoning Province \(with photo\)](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, met the Governor of Liaoning Province, Mr Tang Yijun, at the Chief Executive's Office this afternoon (November 28).

Welcoming Mr Tang's first visit to Hong Kong in his capacity as the Governor of Liaoning Province, Mrs Lam said she was pleased to meet with him again following their meeting in September last year when he was the Deputy Secretary of the CPC Zhejiang Provincial Committee and Secretary of the CPC Ningbo Municipal Committee. She also congratulated him on the successful hosting of the economic and trade promotion event between Liaoning and Hong Kong today.

Mrs Lam said that Liaoning and Hong Kong have close economic and trade ties and Hong Kong has been the largest source of external investment in Liaoning over the years. She added that the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region set up the Liaoning Liaison Unit (LNLU) at the end of 2014 to further strengthen co-operation between the two places in areas including economic and trade affairs, culture and arts as well as youth exchanges, and expressed the hope that Mr Tang will continue the support for the work of the LNLU to promote co-operation between Liaoning and Hong Kong. She pointed out that Hong Kong is a premier international financial centre and ranks top in the world in terms of initial public offering funds raised so far this year and that Hong Kong has a well-developed and internationally-aligned professional services sector. With the further opening up of Liaoning Province, she said she welcomes Liaoning enterprises to make use of Hong Kong as the platform to "go global" and to jointly explore the international market.



[CFS follows up on illegal import of sweet potato from Japan](#)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (November 28) that 60 cartons of sweet potato (a total of 300 kilograms) from Chiba Prefecture, Japan, were illegally imported into Hong Kong, breaching the relevant Food Safety Order. None of the product concerned has entered the market. The CFS is following up on the case.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS inspected a consignment of food imported from Japan and found that the above-mentioned product from Chiba Prefecture therein was not accompanied with a radiation certificate and an exporter certificate issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of Japan, breaching the relevant Food Safety Order. The product concerned has not entered the market and has been marked and sealed by the CFS. The Centre has taken a sample of the product concerned for testing of the radiation level and no radiation has been detected.

"According to the Order, the import of vegetables, fruit, milk, milk beverages and dried milk from four Japanese prefectures, namely Ibaraki, Tochigi, Chiba and Gunma, must be accompanied with radiation certificates and exporter certificates issued by the MAFF of Japan."

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action, including informing the Japanese authorities concerned of the incident. Prosecution will be instituted against the importer concerned should there be sufficient evidence. Investigation is ongoing.

CHP investigates outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection at residential child care centre in Causeway Bay

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (November 28) investigating an outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection (URI) at a residential child care centre in Causeway Bay, and appealed to members of the public and staff of institutions to stay alert and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene.

The outbreak affected 11 boys and nine girls aged 5 months to 3, who have developed URI symptoms including fever, cough and runny nose since October 25. All of them sought medical attention. Among them, five required hospitalisation and were discharged following treatment. All patients are now in stable condition.

The nasopharyngeal swabs of the five hospitalised patients tested positive for adenovirus upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit and advised the child care centre to adopt necessary infection control measures against respiratory tract infections. The centre has been placed under medical surveillance.

Adenoviruses are a group of viruses which infect the mucous membranes. Depending on the type of virus, they may cause respiratory illnesses, but also diarrhoea, eye infections and rashes. Infections can occur all year round. Young children, the elderly and immunocompromised patients are more susceptible.

"The infection mainly spreads through air droplets, direct contact of the oro-nasal secretions of patients, or ingestion of contaminated food or water, and may cause outbreaks of acute respiratory or eye infections in institutional settings such as schools and hospitals," a spokesman for the CHP said.

To prevent adenovirus infection, the public should take heed of the measures below:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, then dry with a disposable paper towel or hand dryer. When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70-80 per cent alcohol-based handrub as an effective alternative;
- Wear gloves and a surgical mask while disposing of or handling vomitus and faeces, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of the soiled tissue in a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly;
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from going to work or school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly;
- Avoid sharing eye medicines, eye make-up and other items that may come into contact with the eyes;
- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as furniture, toys and commonly shared items with 1:99 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of 5.25 per cent bleach with 99 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes, and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol;
- Use absorbent disposable towels to wipe away obvious contaminants such as respiratory secretions, and then disinfect the surface and neighbouring areas with 1:49 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of 5.25 per cent bleach with 49 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation. Avoid going to crowded or poorly ventilated public places; high-risk individuals may consider putting on surgical masks while in such places; and

- Children developing symptoms of infection should refrain from going to school and seek medical advice.

The public may visit the CHP's page on [adenovirus infection](#) for more information.