

Territory-wide flag day today

Fu Hong Society has been issued a Public Subscription Permit to hold a territory-wide flag sale from 7am to 12.30pm today (October 20), a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the Charitable Fund-raising Control Team at 2832 4311 during office hours. Information on the flag days of the month is available at the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_whatsnew/). Permits for flag days containing contact information of the flag-selling organisations and information on the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_recentlyap/). For enquiries about the detailed flag-selling arrangements, please contact the individual flag-selling organisations.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities covered by the Public Subscription Permit issued by the SWD have also been uploaded to the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/fundraising).

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

Opening remarks by Project Manager / Major Works (Special Duties) of Highways Department at press briefing on preparation work of Government for commissioning of HZMB

Following is the opening remarks by the Project Manager / Major Works (Special Duties) of Highways Department, Mr Raymond Kong, at a press briefing today (October 19) on preparation work of the Government for the commissioning of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge:

I will present in Cantonese and briefly recap in English.

In this slide, the red line shows the alignment of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB). As shown in the drawing, the new bridge will greatly shorten the distance between Hong Kong and the western part of the Pearl

River Delta (PRD). That would greatly enhance the connectivity between Hong Kong and all these cities on the western part of PRD.

This slide shows the overall layout of the HZMB. The HZMB mainly consists of two parts. First is the main bridge which is 30km, consisting of about a 22.9km long viaduct and a 6.7km of tunnel. The other part are the ports and the link roads built by the three governments, which includes Hong Kong Port, Zhuhai and Macao Ports, the Zhuhai Link Road. On the Hong Kong side, it includes the Hong Kong Link Road and the Hong Kong Port.

As announced by the Secretary just now, we expect the Mainline of the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link (Southern Connection) will be opened at the same time as the HZMB and the Hong Kong Port. The opening of this mainline would greatly alleviate the traffic impact of the road network on the Airport Island and also in Tung Chung.

This slide shows the main road connections from Hong Kong Port to Zhuhai and Macao and also to various districts within Hong Kong.

Just now the slide shows the overall facilities of the Hong Kong Port. Basically the port can be divided into two parts. On the western part, it is the passenger clearance building and the north and south public transport interchange, which are basically used to serve all passengers using public transport to use the port to arrive and depart from Hong Kong. On the eastern part, there would be boundary crossing facilities for the vehicles, including private vehicles and goods vehicles going in and out of Hong Kong.

Just now the slide shows different routing for different types of vehicles and going out of Hong Kong towards Zhuhai and Macao.

This shows the reverse direction when vehicles are coming from Zhuhai and Macao into Hong Kong. These are the traffic routing.

This is the vehicle clearance plaza on the Hong Kong Port. Together on the day of commissioning, we will have 52 kiosks: 30 for private cars (15 in-bound, 15 out-bound); we will have 10 kiosks for goods vehicles (again five in-bound, five out-bound); and there will be a total of 12 kiosks for cross-boundary shuttles and cross-boundary coaches. There will be a one-stop boundary crossing clearance for quarantine, immigration and customs. By using the one-stop clearance, it should greatly bring convenience to the drivers and the passengers by saving their travel and clearance time.

This is the outside appearance of the Passenger Clearance Building. The Passenger Clearance Building is the iconic building of the Hong Kong Port. Especially the roof adopts undulating wavy shape which is used to mean the surrounding ocean of the Port. In order to build the roof, it is a very difficult challenge for the construction team. The contractor has adopted a very innovative idea by using large precast units, 45 large pieces and 36 module pieces. All these large pieces of panels are precast and then transport to Hong Kong, and under stringent restriction of the airport height restrictions, all these panels are jacked up and horizontally moved to their

positions. This type of construction not only speeds up the construction progress, and also enhances the quality and reduces the risk of working at height.

This is the Departure Hall of the Passenger Clearance Building. You will notice that all the columns are tree-type columns. We think this type of design will greatly increase the spaciousness of the Departure Hall.

This shows the drop off point and the departure point for passengers using the passenger building.

This shows the facilities provided within the Passenger Clearance Building, which include restaurants, convenience stores, beverage and food stores and ATMs. The Airport Authority Hong Kong will set up a check-in counter here and the Hong Kong Tourism Board will set up an information counter within the Building.

This shows the Hong Kong Link Road which basically connects the Hong Kong Port with the Main Bridge. The Hong Kong Link Road is 12km long comprising 1.6km of at-grade road, 1km Scenic Hill Tunnel and 9.4km viaducts built on land and on sea. Particularly, I want to mention the 1km Scenic Hill Tunnel since it was built under the Airport Railway and Airport Road. During the construction, we had to maintain the operation of all these infrastructure facilities. So, within the 1km of the construction, the contractor has adopted four different kinds of construction methods. This posed really a great challenge to the construction team.

This shows the 9.4km viaduct which basically ends at the boundary between Hong Kong and Guangdong, and further links up with the East Artificial Island of the Main Bridge.

This is the new website for the bridge project, which will be launched today. Further information would be available in the website.

Opening remarks by Deputy Commissioner for Transport at press briefing on preparation work of Government for commissioning of HZMB

Following is the opening remarks by the Deputy Commissioner for Transport (Transport Services and Management), Ms Macella Lee, at a press briefing today (October 19) on preparation work of the Government for the commissioning of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB):

And now I recap the major points about domestic transport services. There are various transport modes to and from Hong Kong Port including franchised buses, green minibuses, coaches and taxis. People can interchange to the shuttle bus in order to go to the Zhuhai and Macao control points.

We will introduce three new bus routes and one green minibus route. Passengers using MTR can interchange to route no. B5 at Sunny Bay Station or route B6 at Tung Chung Station. Route B4 links up the Airport and the Hong Kong Port to facilitate air passengers and also those going to the Asia World Expo. There will also be one green minibus route from Tung Chung to Hong Kong Port. It will go via the catering area in the airport island.

Apart from these new routes, people can also use nine direct "A" routes to the Hong Kong Port. Eight of them operated by Citybus and Long Win bus companies, they are from the main districts in Hong Kong. And there is also a route A35 which operates from Mui Wo help passengers from South Lantau going to this control point.

Apart from franchised buses, especially people travel in groups such as tours or organisations on contract hire services can also use coaches to come to this control point.

Of course, passengers can use all three types of taxis, i.e. urban, NT and Lantau to this control point. Whilst we encourage people to use public transport services to this control point, those who would like to drive, we will provide parking services in this Hong Kong Port. There are 673 private car parking spaces and 14 parking spaces for motorcycle. About half of these parking spaces can be reserved on a pre-booking basis and we encourage motorists to pre-book before they drive their cars to this port. TD's "Hong Kong eMobility" website and mobile app will provide real time parking vacancy information about these car parks and people can check in this website.

I would have to recap the main points about cross-boundary public transport and traffic arrangements. The shuttle bus is the key transport mode linking the three ports, Hong Kong and Zhuhai and HK and Macao. It operates 24 hours daily and passengers can buy tickets in the departure hall or through its website in advance.

The adult fare of the routes is HK\$65 during day time and HK\$70 during night time. Half fare concessions are offered to children, disabled and elderly passengers.

Apart from shuttle buses, passengers can also use cross-boundary coach services which provide direct point-to-point services from Hong Kong destinations to destinations in Mainland and also in Macao.

Those who would like personalised services may also take cross-boundary hire cars. It is worth mentioning that because of the provision of about 3 000 private car parking spaces at the Macao Port. There is a HZMB Macao Port Park-and-Ride Scheme.

Hong Kong private car owners can apply to drive their private cars to the car parks through the bridge. No vehicle licence by the Macao authorities are required, but there will be an identification label, which when you apply for a closed road permit from Transport Department, we will handle the same application. With the label, you have to do three things before you drive there. First, book a timeslot from the online platform, then, make sure that you have valid insurances of Macao and the Mainland also apart from Hong Kong. And also update the Mainland vehicle insurance information in the Mainland's online platform.

For goods vehicles, for the sum 12 000 Hong Kong goods vehicles, they now can use the Macao bridge on day one, without any application. And for goods vehicles between Hong Kong and Macao, the two authorities are still discussing about the details. We expect that these services would be available when the loading facilities at the Macao Port is available.

I recap the key points in English. We know there are concerns about traffic, and to strengthen traffic management and monitoring, we will install additional mobile variable message signs on top of those fixed ones. We will also complete the installation of traffic detectors for automatic traffic incident detection which facilitate more efficient traffic monitoring and hence faster information dissemination to the public. We also add tow trucks along the expressway for quicker recovery. We will also disseminate information through TD's mobile app.

As the Secretary has mentioned, we have also taken measures to manage traffic flows during this time and we will closely review the situations.

In order to improve the communications among departments and the contractors, we also have taken drills in order to test the communications and recovery actions.

This ends my presentation.

Director of Immigration attended preparation meeting about commissioning of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge

The Director of Immigration, Mr Tsang Kwok-wai visited Zhuhai this afternoon (October 19) and attended a preparation meeting with representatives of Zhuhai General Station of Exit and Entry Frontier

Inspection and Public Security Police Force of Macao for the commissioning of crossing boundary control points at the three locations of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge. To ascertain a smooth immigration clearance operation of the control points and to facilitate the flow of people and goods between the places, the three meeting parties discussed in-depth and agreed on topics about the commissioning of control points, estimated passenger and vehicular traffic flow, mode of clearance, safety management and inter-departmental liaison mechanism, etc.

The Immigration Department has a total of 62 traditional counters and 45 multi-purpose e-Channels in the passenger clearance building, together with 52 vehicle inspection kiosks, to provide efficient and effective immigration clearance services for cross-boundary passengers and vehicles.

Speech by CS at International Institute of Management 33rd Anniversary Dinner (English only)

Following is the speech by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, at the International Institute of Management (IIM) 33rd Anniversary Dinner today (October 19):

David (President of the IIM, Professor David Lan), Professor Teo (Chairman of the IIM, Professor Maurice Teo), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. It is my pleasure to join you tonight at the International Institute of Management's 33rd Anniversary Celebration Dinner.

2018 is a special year. Not only does it mark the 33rd anniversary of the IIM, it is also the 40th anniversary of the reform and opening up of our motherland. Under the theme of "Joint Development, Shared Prosperity", the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government is organising activities for the public to look back on how Hong Kong has actively taken part in the country's reform and opening up over the past 40 years, and to look ahead on how Hong Kong and Mainland China can work together to expand the scope of co-operation and explore more opportunities under the country's further reform and opening up.

Over the past 40 years, our motherland has transformed into a modern economy. During the process, Hong Kong has played an active role and contributed to the development by serving as a key platform and super-connector in attracting and ushering in foreign investment into the motherland whilst assisting Mainland enterprises to go global.

Hong Kong's economy has flourished at the same time. We have grown 4 per

cent in real terms in the first half of 2018. Unemployment is at 2.8 per cent, or the lowest in 20 years. Investors have cast their vote of confidence in Hong Kong, as an increasing number of companies establish a presence in the city. There are over 8 700 companies setting up their regional or local offices in Hong Kong, representing an increase of 6.4 per cent year-on-year. Many members and corporate partners of the IIM have participated in the thriving economic development of Hong Kong.

However, Hong Kong cannot just sit back and rest on its laurels. Looking ahead, the future is full of challenges. Multilateral trade is experiencing the most severe setback since the establishment of the World Trade Organisation. The rise of unilateralism and intensifying trade friction initiated by the United States of America against Mainland China is causing great uncertainties in the global economic outlook. As a key link between these two mega economies and other overseas markets, Hong Kong will not be and cannot be immune from this global trade dispute.

As always, Hong Kong remains committed to upholding free trade principles. To cope with the rough seas ahead of us, we have been working on both the defensive and proactive fronts.

On the defensive side, we need to ensure that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) which constitute over 98 per cent of companies in Hong Kong have a safety net to fall back on. Since earlier this month, the HKSAR Government has introduced a series of measures to enhance the SME Financing Guarantee Scheme to help SMEs and non-listed enterprises to obtain financing from lenders. In view of the external economic development, we have extended the offer of 80 per cent loan guarantee services under the Scheme to mid-2019. In addition, the maximum loan amount has been raised to \$15 million and the maximum loan guarantee period has been lengthened from five to seven years in order to lower the monthly repayment amount.

On the proactive front, we have been taking concrete action in seizing the enormous opportunities arising from the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area). These two national development strategies will have a direct bearing on the future of Hong Kong's economy and drive us to achieve new heights.

The Belt and Road Initiative is a mammoth national strategy, promoting land, sea, energy, financial and cultural links among more than 60 countries in Asia, Africa and Europe. These countries account for about 31 per cent of global GDP and 33 per cent of global merchandise trade. By the first half of 2018, trade volume between Mainland China and Belt and Road countries exceeded US\$600 billion. Chinese firms have built more than 80 overseas economic and trade co-operation zones, with a total investment of more than US\$25 billion, creating over 244 000 local jobs.

Hong Kong is well positioned to provide professional service support that is critical to building and construction, risk management and financing. In so doing, we will have new opportunities to export our standards and systems, creating greater access to foreign markets for Hong Kong business, while making a positive contribution to the development of emerging markets.

Professional service providers will be among the first to benefit, but other kinds of business will reap as Hong Kong exports a higher value of professional service. The Professional Services Advancement Support Scheme administered by the CEDB will continue to provide funding support for projects to enhance external promotion for our professional services and to better equip the professional services sector in seizing the opportunities and meeting the challenges brought by the Belt and Road Initiative.

The HKSAR Government is firmly committed to establishing Hong Kong as the prime platform and a key link for the Belt and Road Initiative. We are determined to conduct more government-to-government dialogues and establish more bilateral and multilateral ties with the Mainland and overseas economies.

To promote government-to-government links, we have set up the Infrastructure Financing Facilitation Office under the Hong Kong Monetary Authority to provide a platform for infrastructure financing as infrastructure development is at the heart of the Belt and Road Initiative. The Department of Justice, led by the Secretary for Justice, is taking the lead to promote Hong Kong's legal services and bolster Hong Kong's position as an international arbitration centre including developing an online dispute resolution platform. In parallel, the Insurance Authority is building a Belt and Road Insurance Exchange Facilitation (BRIEF) Platform to bring together key insurance and reinsurance stakeholders to help Mainland companies find suitable insurance services in Hong Kong.

On enhancement of bilateral and multilateral relationships, in the past 12 months, we have concluded a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Macao, another with Georgia which is of strategic importance and a very notable FTA with ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

We have just concluded FTA negotiations with the Maldives, while bilateral negotiations with Australia are ongoing. We are also exploring ways to forge closer economic ties with the United Kingdom by way of an FTA on the basis of the foundation laid by the Strategic Dialogue on Trade Partnership between the two sides. Meanwhile, we are initiating FTA dialogue with the Pacific Alliance which consists of Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, and planning to seek accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership when the time is ripe.

On a more regional front, the Greater Bay Area is a key link to the far-reaching Belt and Road Initiative, serving as a converging point for flows of trade, investment and talent between Mainland China, Southeast Asia and all the way to Europe.

In July last year, President Xi Jinping visited Hong Kong and witnessed the signing of the Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the Bay Area between the National Development and Reform Commission and the governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. In the past year, relevant Central Authorities and the governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao continued to proactively take forward work relating to the development of the Greater Bay Area.

The development of the Greater Bay Area will bring Hong Kong new areas of economic growth and the opportunity to enlarge the living environment of Hong Kong residents. With the commissioning of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the new land boundary control point at Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai, a one-hour living circle encompassing Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao is basically formed.

Since last year, the Central Government has introduced a series of measures to provide facilitation for Hong Kong people living, working and studying on the Mainland, in particular the measure introduced by the State Council in August this year to allow Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan residents to apply for residence permits which has substantially enriched this living circle.

Our Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, is a member of the leading group to explore and identify the economic, social and livelihood opportunities brought to Hong Kong by the development of the Greater Bay Area. Within the HKSAR Government, a high-level Steering Committee for the Development of the Greater Bay Area will be established to oversee the overall co-ordination of matters relating to the HKSAR's participation in the development of the Greater Bay Area. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau will set up a Greater Bay Area Development Office and appoint a Commissioner for the Development of the Greater Bay Area to implement the relevant work. These underline the importance of the Greater Bay Area.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Chief Executive just announced the second Policy Address of the current-term Government last week. It sets out 244 new initiatives and 470 ongoing initiatives to propel Hong Kong forward. We will continue to perform the roles as "facilitator" and "promoter" to proactively foster Hong Kong's long-term economic and social development, provide more land for housing and future economic activities, reinforce Hong Kong's advantages by stepping up investment in education, as well as innovation and technology, scale up our established industries, improve people's livelihood and promote quality living. Our aim is for the Government to join hands with the whole community including the IIM to strive ahead and build a future full of hope and opportunities.

Tonight in this hall, the International Institute of Management has brought together players who have contributed significantly to Hong Kong's achievements and Mainland China's economic reform, as well as development in overseas markets. I would like to extend my warmest gratitude to you all for your sterling contribution over the years, and look forward to your continuous support and wise counsel as vibrant Hong Kong seizes new opportunities, overcomes challenges and forges ahead with vigour. Thank you.