

## FEHD responds to media enquiries

â€‹In response to media enquiries, a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (July 18):

â€‹The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the FEHD collects food samples at retail level for safety testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. While designated samples provided by retail outlets will not be accepted for testing, food samples are taken by staff of the FEHD who purchase the products as customer without revealing their identity to the vendors. If a sample fails to meet the established safety standards, the CFS will take appropriate risk management actions, including issuing press releases to inform the public of the related risks. According to the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, if ready-to-eat food contains *Bacillus cereus* at a level of less than 1 000 per gram, it is considered satisfactory; a level of 1 000 to 100 000 is considered borderline but requires further action; a level of more than 100 000 is considered unsatisfactory.

â€‹The CFS collected a sample of the bottled preserved bean curd concerned for testing from a retail outlet in Sai Ying Pun at the end of June. The test result showed that the sample contained *Bacillus cereus* at a level of 130 000 per gram. According to the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, if ready-to-eat food contains *Bacillus cereus* at a level of more than 100 000 per gram, it is considered unsatisfactory. The CFS has therefore strengthened relevant surveillance immediately, and purchased in early July a sample of another batch of the same bottled preserved bean curd product from a retail outlet in Jordan for testing. The test result showed that the sample contained *Bacillus cereus* at a level of 10 000 per gram, which is considered borderline but not satisfactory and further action is required. According to the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, the CFS shall collect a follow-up sample of another batch of the product (not designated samples provided by the retail outlet). The CFS staff then purchased a sample of another batch of the bottled preserved bean curd product from the above-mentioned retail outlet in Jordan again in mid-July. The follow-up test result showed that the sample contained *Bacillus cereus* at a level of 1 300 000 per gram, which is considered unsatisfactory. The CFS has informed the retailer and manufacturer concerned, and has instructed them to stop sales and to initiate recalls of the affected product immediately, as well as to continue improving the food production process. The investigation is ongoing.

â€‹Furthermore, during an inspection of the food factory concerned by the CFS staff in the afternoon of July 4, it was found that some of the raw materials were improperly stored and the hygiene condition of the packaging area was not up to standard, which increase the risk of food contamination. The CFS staff immediately provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff of the food factory, and requested them to review and improve the food production process, including proper storage of raw materials, and to carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection.

From 2021 to mid-July of 2024, the CFS collected under its routine Food Surveillance Programme more than 140 preserved bean curd samples that cover 26 brands, including 23 preserved bean curd samples produced by the manufacturer concerned, for testing. In addition to the two samples concerned, an excessive amount of *Bacillus cereus* was also found in a sample of another brand. The CFS has taken follow-up actions on the above-mentioned unsatisfactory samples in accordance with the established procedures, including informing the vendors concerned of the test results, instructing them to stop selling the affected products concerned and tracing the sources of the food items in question. The CFS has also announced the test results concerning the unsatisfactory samples and explained to the public the food safety risks involved.

*Bacillus cereus* is a spore-forming bacterium that grows best at 30 degrees Celsius to 37 degrees Celsius but stops growing at below 4 degrees Celsius. It is commonly found in the environment. Unhygienic conditions in food processing and storage may give rise to its growth. Consuming food contaminated with excessive *Bacillus cereus* or its heat-stable toxins may cause gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting and diarrhea. In general, the presence of more than 100 000 cells of *Bacillus cereus* per gram of food can cause food poisoning.

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## [Celebrating Hong Kong AI, culture and fashion at Victoria and Albert Museum \(with photo\)](#)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (London ETO) and the Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency (CCIDA) supported the Culture X AI 2024-2025: Kan Tai Keung X AiDLab X Hong Kong Fashion Designers Show on July 17 (London time) at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the United Kingdom.

Organised by the Laboratory for Artificial Intelligence in Design (AiDLab) which was jointly established by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) and the Royal College of Art (RCA), and funded by CCIDA, the unique showcase featured the collaborative efforts of renowned design master and ink painter, Dr Kan Tai-keung, and five esteemed Hong Kong fashion designers: Aries Sin, Derek Chan, Sophia XinLi, Tak Lee, and Wilson Choi. Each designer presented collections crafted using AI, highlighting the convergence of cutting-edge technology and artistic expression in the fashion industry.

The Director-General of the London ETO, Mr Gilford Law, delivered the opening remarks welcoming around 300 guests at the pre-show reception. "Today

marks a significant step towards positioning Hong Kong as an international hub that integrates creativity and innovation in the arts. The collaboration between PolyU and RCA through AiDLab reflects Hong Kong's strategic focus on integrating AI into its creative industries, aligning with its vision to become a global centre for innovation and technology," he remarked.

The Assistant Commissioner for Cultural and Creative Industries, Mrs Lowell Cho, also delivered a speech as the lead sponsor of the event. "Culture X AI 2024-2025: Culture and Future Mode is one of the pioneering projects sponsored by the CCIDA to promote the use of AI among Hong Kong's cultural and creative industries. We are delighted to see the fusion of creativity and innovation among Dr Kan and the five up-and-coming Hong Kong fashion designers. Their design collaborations, together with the application of AI, will not only guide us through the five key phases of Dr Kan's creative career, but also signify how AI can assist human's original creative muses to reach their full potential in terms of aesthetics and craftsmanship," she added.

The Culture X AI 2024-2025: Kan Tai Keung X AiDLab X Hong Kong Fashion Designers Show is one of the six key events of the Culture X AI project of the AiDLab. The project aims at showcasing the best of Hong Kong's culture, design and innovation practitioners on the world's stage.



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## [CE warmly congratulates victorious conclusion of Third Plenary Session of 20th CPC Central Committee](#)

â€‹The Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC Central Committee) concluded in Beijing today (July 18). The session adopted the Resolution of the CPC Central Committee on Further Deepening Reform Comprehensively to Advance Chinese Modernization. The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, extended his warmest congratulations to the

victorious conclusion of the session. He said that the session holds great significance as it was a very important meeting convened at the crucial period of building a great country in all respects and achieving national rejuvenation through the Chinese path to modernisation.

The communique of the session stated that the session gave a highly positive assessment on the successful implementation and major achievements of the comprehensive deepening of reforms during the new era. The session studied the issues of comprehensive deepening of reforms and advancing Chinese modernisation, holding that the current and upcoming period is a crucial in building a great country in all respects and achieving national rejuvenation through the Chinese path to modernisation. It noted that Chinese modernisation has been advanced continuously through reform and opening up, and it will surely embrace broader horizons through further reform and opening up. The session also pointed out that the overall objectives of further deepening reform comprehensively are to continue improving and developing the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and modernise the country's system and capacity for governance.

Mr Lee said that he was deeply encouraged by the continuous enhancement in the breadth and depth of the country's comprehensive deepening of reform, and the ongoing acceleration of further modernisation of the country's system and capacity for governance. The 20th National Congress of the CPC put forward a series of major reform measures, while the session focused on further deepening reform comprehensively to advance Chinese modernisation, which has a profound impact on Hong Kong and the world.

"History has proven that Hong Kong has been playing an active role in the country's reform and opening up. As a 'super connector' and 'super value-adder' connecting the Mainland with the world, Hong Kong gives full play to its role of going global and attracting foreign investment for the country. At present, momentous changes of a like not seen in a century are accelerating across the world. The country has entered a crucial period of development in which strategic opportunities, risks, and challenges are concurrent. Hong Kong should firmly grasp the enormous opportunities brought by the country's further and comprehensive deepening of reforms in advancing Chinese modernisation. Hong Kong should continue to leverage its unique advantages of enjoying strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world and its important role in deepening reforms of the country, better integrating into the national development thereby. All sectors of the community should earnestly learn and implement the spirit of the session, give full play to the power and value of the principle of 'patriots administering Hong Kong', and fulfill Hong Kong's responsibilities, seize Hong Kong's opportunities, and make Hong Kong's contributions on the country's journey of further deepening reforms comprehensively to advance Chinese modernisation," Mr Lee said.

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# HKSAR Government's Institutional Green Bonds Offering

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (the HKSAR Government) today (July 18) announced the successful offering of approximately HK\$25 billion worth of green bonds (the Green Bonds), denominated in Renminbi (RMB), US dollars (USD), and euro (EUR) under the Government Sustainable Bond Programme (previously known as the Government Green Bond Programme).

Following a virtual roadshow on July 16, 2024, the Green Bonds were priced on July 17, 2024 as follows:

- RMB2 billion 2-year tranche at 2.60 per cent;
- RMB2 billion 5-year tranche at 2.70 per cent;
- RMB2 billion 10-year tranche at 2.80 per cent;
- RMB2 billion 20-year tranche at 3.05 per cent;
- RMB2 billion 30-year tranche at 3.15 per cent;
- US\$1 billion 3-year tranche at 4.336 per cent; and
- EUR750 million 7-year tranche at 3.379 per cent.

The offering attracted participation from a wide spectrum of investors globally, with more than HK\$120 billion equivalent in orders. In particular, the 20-year and 30-year RMB Green Bonds were offered for the first time by the HKSAR Government, among which the 30-year bond is also the longest tenor RMB bond offered by the HKSAR Government so far, providing new benchmarks for the market.

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, said, "The issuance of Government green bonds is an important initiative to promote Hong Kong's low-carbon transformation and consolidate Hong Kong's development as a green and sustainable finance hub. Global institutional investors responded enthusiastically to the subscription of these Green Bonds, reaffirming our efforts on this front. The inaugural offering of the 20-year and 30-year RMB bonds helps to extend the offshore RMB yield curve, further enrich offshore RMB product offerings, and promote RMB internationalisation in an orderly manner."

The Green Bonds are being issued by the HKSAR Government under the Global Medium Term Note Programme dedicated to green bond issuances established in early 2021. The Green Bonds are expected to be settled on July 24, 2024 and listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and the London Stock Exchange. The Green Bonds have been assigned credit ratings of AA+ by S&P Global Ratings and AA- by Fitch.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority acted as the HKSAR Government's representative in this green bond offering. Proceeds raised will be credited to the Capital Works Reserve Fund to finance or refinance projects that provide environmental benefits and support sustainable development.

The HKSAR Government published its Green Bond Framework (the Framework) in March 2019, which sets out how green bond proceeds will be used to fund projects to improve the environment and facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy. The Framework was subsequently updated in February 2022, reflecting the HKSAR Government's latest commitments and strategy in combatting climate change and aligning with the latest international standards and practices in the green bond market. Vigeo Eiris, which is now part of Moody's ESG Solutions, has provided a Second Party Opinion for both the original and updated Green Bond Framework. The Green Bonds have also received the Green and Sustainable Finance Certificate (Pre-issuance Stage) from the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency. The HKSAR Government has since published four annual reports on the allocation of the proceeds from previous green bond issuances and the expected environmental benefits of the projects financed.

The list of Joint Global Coordinators, Joint Bookrunners, Joint Lead Managers, and Joint Green Structuring Banks for the Green Bonds offering are set out at the attached Annex.

#### Investors' Distribution by Category

Category	RMB Green Bonds	USD Green Bonds	EUR Green Bonds
Banks	71%	57%	48%
Central banks, sovereign wealth funds and international organisations	13%	22%	14%
Fund managers, private banks, insurance companies and others	16%	21%	38%

Note: The RMB and EUR Green Bonds were offered in Reg S format and the USD Green Bonds in 144A / Reg S format (Note).

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Note: Reg S pertains to offerings of securities made outside of the United States. Rule 144A pertains to placements of securities to qualified institutional buyers in the United States meeting the requirements of that Rule.

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## [Public urged to heighten vigilance against mosquito-borne diseases \(with photo\)](#)

In light of the increasing threat of dengue fever (DF) globally, the Department of Health (DH) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (July 18) reminded members of the public to stay vigilant against mosquito-borne diseases, enhance anti-mosquito awareness, implement mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

According to the World Health Organization, the global incidence of DF has increased significantly over the past year. Since 2024, more than 10 million cases have been recorded in the Americas, which is a record high. A total of 37 cases have been recorded in Hong Kong as of yesterday (July 17), of which 34 are imported cases and three are local cases. Most of the imported cases have visited some tourist spots in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, during the incubation period. The three local cases include one recorded in April with a patient living in Siu Sai Wan and two recorded in June with both patients living in Tin Shui Wai. The



Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the DH has conducted active case finding and medical surveillance for the local cases. For the cases in Tin Shui Wai, as of yesterday (July 17), more than 5 200 residents in 2 000 households of the housing estate where the patients residing were reached. So far, no new cases have been found. The prevention and control measures implemented by the CHP in Tin Shui Wai are continuing.

In view of the two local DF cases that occurred in Tin Shui Wai, the FEHD has conducted vector mosquito investigations and targeted mosquito control operations. The FEHD has intensified mosquito prevention and control work in the residences, workplaces and locations visited by the patients during the incubation period and after illness onset. These efforts include:

- conducting fogging operations in the scrubby areas within a 250-metre radius of the related locations to eradicate adult mosquitoes;
- carrying out weekly inspections of the above locations, removing stagnant water, applying insecticide and disposing of abandoned water containers to prevent mosquito breeding; and
- stepping up publicity and education work, including organising health talks, deploying the Mobile Education Centre and distributing leaflets.

The latest territory-wide *Aedes albopictus* mosquito surveillance shows that *Aedes albopictus* is widely distributed in Hong Kong. The hot and rainy weather this summer is conducive to the breeding of mosquito vectors. In addition, more people travelling abroad during the summer may increase the chance of acquiring DF infection, leading to an increase in imported cases. In this connection, the CHP cannot exclude the possibility of a further increase in the risk of local DF transmission. To prevent the further spread of DF and its evolution into an endemic disease, the public should co-operate with the Government to implement effective mosquito prevention and control measures at this critical juncture.

DF is clinically characterised by high fever, severe headache, pain behind the eyes, muscle and joint pain, nausea, vomiting, swollen lymph nodes and rash. The CHP appeals to the public, in particular residents in Tin Shui Wai, to pay special attention to anti-mosquito measures. If feeling unwell, one should seek medical advice as soon as possible and call the CHP hotline (2125 2374) if in doubt.

In order to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of the general public towards mosquito-borne diseases and its prevention, the CHP commissioned a survey between January and February of 2024, in which 2 002 members of the public aged 18 or above were successfully interviewed.

In the survey, it was found that the respondents had good awareness of mosquito-borne diseases, with 92.7 per cent of the respondents correctly identifying DF as a mosquito-borne disease, while the figures for Japanese encephalitis and malaria were 83.0 per cent and 68.6 per cent respectively. However, their awareness of the transmission and complications of mosquito-borne diseases was relatively low. Only less than half of them (44.9 per cent) acknowledged that a second infection of DF virus with different serotypes could lead to severe disease, and only about 30 per cent of the



respondents could correctly point out that asymptomatic individuals infected with dengue fever virus can transmit the virus to mosquitoes.

The survey also found that the insect repellent knowledge of the respondents was not sufficient. 77.6 per cent of the respondents did not know the effective ingredients of insect repellents, and 98.8 per cent of them were uncertain about the recommended diethyltoluamide (DEET) concentration. Although around 65 per cent of the respondents agreed that insect repellents could protect them from mosquito-borne diseases, the proportion of respondents who could use insect repellents properly was relatively low. 70.0 per cent of them did not check the ingredients when purchasing insect repellents, while 69.7 per cent never applied insect repellents for 14 days when returning to Hong Kong from affected areas of DF to prevent mosquito bites.

A spokesman for the CHP reminded travellers going to DF affected countries or areas to take extra precautionary measures to prevent mosquito bites. Travellers who return from affected areas should apply insect repellent for 14 days after arrival to prevent mosquito bites. If feeling unwell such as having a fever, the person should seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor.

Moreover, the spokesman stressed that the public should read the label instructions carefully when purchasing insect repellents and could choose insect repellents containing DEET. The public should take heed of the tips below when applying DEET-containing insect repellents:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children\*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Reapply only when needed and follow the instructions.

\* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are prevalent and where mosquito bite is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent. They also should apply insect repellent appropriately for 14 days upon arrival in Hong Kong to prevent mosquito bites.

Furthermore, the public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;

- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing according to product label and uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the following web pages for more information: the DF page of the [CHP](#) and the [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), and the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

