

SFST's speech at 25A Reception in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (English only)

Following is the video speech by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, at the 25A Reception in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, this evening (May 27):

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Selamat petang (good evening). It is a great pleasure of mine to see you all at this reception, for the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. This event, together with the business conference held earlier today, marks the beginning of the series of events to commemorate this important milestone of ours and to underscore the bright future ahead.

This reception is a good occasion for us to share the joy and excitement with all of you. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for the support and encouragement from Malaysia and our friends and counterparts here throughout our journey. We are particularly impressed with how close our two places have all along been and the achievements and progresses made together.

There is indeed a lot to marvel at when it comes to Hong Kong-ASEAN bilateral ties over the years. The ASEAN has been our second largest trading partner for a decade, and our relations on those fronts have always been encouragingly strong. The Hong Kong-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement and Investment Agreement, which came fully into force in February 2021, are further enhancing our already very close business and investment ties. At the same time, there are multi-level exchanges and co-operation, in a wide spectrum from business and investment to cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

Looking ahead, it is equally or even more exciting. Home to both major economies and fast-growing ones, our region is ascending in significance. With an ideal location, world-class infrastructure, connections and talents, Hong Kong is well suited to serve the ASEAN's and Malaysia's economic aspirations.

Particularly, numerous major initiatives are evolving around us, offering both Malaysia and Hong Kong boundless opportunities. Just to name a few, such include the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the Belt and Road Initiative, as well as Malaysia's investment-focused policy and legislative reforms like the National Investment Aspirations.

As a free trade practitioner and staunch supporter of the multilateral trading system, we are very glad to see the entry into force of the RCEP earlier this year. Hong Kong is eager to join the agreement to further pursue the common goal of economic advancement with the region.

I am sure that many of you agree Hong Kong is the first-choice springboard to the Mainland. This is particularly so for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, a dynamic economic powerhouse with a market of more than 86 million people and a combined GDP largely equivalent to the ninth largest economy in the world. Hong Kong is also the ideal access point for the Belt and Road Initiative, a vision that sees enhanced connectivity and economic development for more than 100 countries and economies. Opportunities abound in such areas from infrastructure, trade and investment to supply chain, logistics, digital economy and services.

We are now at an even firmer foothold to continue to pursue all these endeavours, with safety and stability restored in our city following the implementation of the National Security Law and the improvement to our electoral system. Such is further buttressed by the 14th Five-Year Plan – the blueprint and development action agenda of our country in the next five years announced by the Central People's Government last year. We would certainly love to share the mutual benefits with our friends from Malaysia.

The positive notes do not stop here. With the relaxing of inbound travel requirements for non-residents earlier this month – I am sure that is music to the ears of many – we do look forward to welcoming you back in Hong Kong to immerse yourselves once again in the vibrancy of our city.

Once again, thank you very much. May I wish you all great health and prosperity. Please do enjoy the evening.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 0.00am today (May 27), a total of 451 patients who tested positive for COVID-19 are currently hospitalised for treatment, including 59 new patients. Among the patients staying in isolation facilities, 87 patients are in isolation wards, eight patients are in second-tier isolation wards and 37 patients are in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre, of which 24 in total are new patients. Among the hospitalised patients, 13 of them are in critical condition and nine are in serious condition, of which seven critical patients are receiving intensive care. There were 54 patients who have recovered, including 39 patients who have been discharged. In addition, one patient who passed away in public hospital was reported.

In the fifth wave of the epidemic, there are 50 057 patients who have recovered so far, including 49 749 patients who have been discharged. And since early 2020, there are 62 437 patients who have recovered, including 62 129 patients who have been discharged.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

CHP investigates 40 confirmed and 52 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 13 cases pending status by nucleic acid tests as well as 145 cases tested positive by rapid antigen tests

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (May 27) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, May 27, the CHP was investigating 105 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus by nucleic acid tests (40 confirmed cases, 52 asymptomatic cases and 13 cases with pending case status) in the past 24 hours. Separately, 145 additional positive cases through rapid antigen tests (RATs) (71 symptomatic cases and 74 asymptomatic cases) were reported. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 761 725 and 449 863 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The aforementioned newly reported cases consist of 29 imported cases (22 cases and seven cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively). The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations on the cases. Please refer to the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

Meanwhile, according to the whole genome sequencing analysis by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch, Hong Kong has recorded a total of 13 cases, 75 cases, 12 cases and three cases carrying the sub-lineages BA.2.12, BA.2.12.1, BA.4 and BA.5 under the Omicron mutant strain respectively.

In addition, as of 0.00am, May 27, a total of 9 162 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 084 and 75 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as three deaths reported from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 9 375 death cases that have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (May 26), the total number of confirmed cases was 332 181, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 198 956, 24 and 230 459 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that as the local situation of COVID-19 infection is still severe, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with social distancing measures, avoid going out and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings. This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

The spokesman reminded that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.

[CE chairs 265th meeting of Fight Crime Committee \(with photo\)](#)

The Chief Executive (CE), Mrs Carrie Lam, chaired the 265th meeting of the Fight Crime Committee (FCC) today (May 27).

Since its establishment in 1973, the FCC has been shouldering the responsibility of planning and guiding the fight against crime. It provides advice and recommends measures to prevent and reduce crime, as well as co-ordinates and monitors the effectiveness of crime-fighting efforts.

Mrs Lam said, "The FCC is an important partner of the Government. I served as the chairperson of the FCC in my capacity as the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) under the previous term of Government, and had worked very closely with the FCC in maintaining the law and order of Hong Kong. It is my pleasure to personally chair the last FCC meeting of this term of Government as the CE today. As professional as always, members have discussed and reviewed the measures to prevent and reduce crimes; and provided practical observations and suggestions."

At the meeting, members were briefed on the following issues:

(i) The law and order situation of Hong Kong in the first quarter of 2022 remained stable. There were a total of 13 866 crimes recorded, a decrease of 6.2 per cent when compared with the same period of 2021, and a decrease of 10 per cent in violent crime was recorded. The detection rate was 29.2 per cent. Overall crimes registered a decrease, mainly due to the drop of various major crimes, including robbery, burglary, wounding and serious assault, criminal intimidation, criminal damage, theft and serious drug offences, etc. However, increases were registered for crimes including homicide, deception and blackmail cases. The FCC supported the Police to continue their efforts in combating various crimes through devoting resources for publicity and education, adopting a multi-agency approach and stepping up intelligence-led enforcement operations, especially against online deception cases and youngsters committing criminal offences;

(ii) The total number of reported drug abusers, young drug abusers and young people arrested for drug offences in 2021 had increased. The FCC noted that more people (especially youngsters) were reported to have abused cocaine and cannabis. They expressed concerns about the increase in the number of persons arrested for drug offences in 2021 by 20 per cent (from 3 849 persons to 4 634 persons) when compared with that in 2020. During the same period, the number of young arrestees aged under 21 for serious drug offences increased by 37 per cent (from 339 persons to 465 persons). The FCC was of the view that although the overall drug abuse and drug situation in Hong Kong was generally under control, the community needed to stay vigilant, especially in drug offences involving young people;

(iii) The Correctional Services Department (CSD) would continue to organise various public education activities and publicity campaigns in 2022-23 to appeal for public acceptance of and community support for rehabilitated offenders, apart from helping the prevention of crime and educating the public on the operation of the Hong Kong criminal justice system. The FCC supported the CSD's efforts in the rehabilitation of offenders, and members were pleased to note that these activities had received positive response from the community; and

(iv) To strengthen the co-operation with local organisations in the prevention and reduction of crime, the FCC would continue to provide funding to the District Fight Crime Committees (DFCCs) in organising different fight crime publicity activities in 2022-23, with a view to complementing the territory-wide anti-crime publicity campaign in disseminating fight crime messages to various sectors in the community.

Mrs Lam further said, "I would like to thank the FCC and DFCCs for their valuable advice and suggestions to the law enforcement agencies over the years in maintaining the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong. I am confident that with our concerted efforts, Hong Kong would continue to be one of the safest cities in the world."

The CS is the chairperson of the FCC. As the post of the CS has been left vacant, the meeting today was chaired by the CE.



[TD to introduce trial queue ticketing system for driving licensing related services at Kowloon Licensing Office](#)

The Transport Department (TD) announced today (May 27) that a trial queue ticketing system will be implemented for driving licensing related services at the Kowloon Licensing Office (KLO) from May 31 (Tuesday) to reduce the number of people waiting at the lobby.

For various driving licensing services and applications for driving tests, if no prior online appointment has been made, applicants are required to obtain a queue ticket on-site before using the counter services. The distribution arrangement of same-day queue tickets is as follows:

1. Same-day queue tickets will be distributed in the morning and afternoon of each working day:
Number of queue tickets to be distributed from 9am: 160 (valid until 2pm of the issue date)
Number of queue tickets to be distributed from 2pm: 100 (valid until 5pm of the issue date)
2. Members of the public are required to input the first four digits or letters of their identification documents (e.g. K123) when obtaining a queue ticket.
3. Each person can only take one queue ticket, and the ticket cannot be transferred to another person.

Holders of a valid queue ticket may enter the KLO with the ticket, and follow the instructions of staff to join a designated queue to wait for counter services. The identity document (ID) number of the applicant must be the same as the ID number printed on the queue ticket in order to be eligible for counter services.

Applicants may scan the QR code on the ticket to check the latest queue

ticket numbers being called at the Licensing Office. There is no need to stay and wait at the KLO. All same-day queue tickets must be used within the designated time period, and will be invalid after expiry.

Apart from the same-day queue tickets, all service arrangements remain unchanged. The KLO provides counter services to members of the public who have made an appointment through the online system for driving licensing related services, and they are reminded to make an appointment in advance before the expiry of the licence. Those who cannot get a queue ticket or do not have an appointment may submit their licensing applications online, by drop-in box, or by post. The hyperlinks for online application for renewal of full driving licences and online appointment booking for driving licensing related services are provided below:

Online application for renewal of full driving licences

www.gov.hk/en/residents/transport/drivinglicense/renewdrivinglicense.htm

Online appointment booking for driving licensing related services

www.gov.hk/en/residents/transport/drivinglicense/abs.htm

The TD will closely observe the implementation of the trial queue ticketing system. Subject to the result of the trial, the TD plans to further extend the arrangement to the other three Licensing Offices.

The TD encourages members of the public to use online licensing services as far as possible. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has set up mobile registration teams at the TD's Licensing Offices to help members of the public register for "iAM Smart+" from May onwards. Those who have registered for "iAM Smart+", which comes with a digital signing function, can fill in and submit applications for vehicle licence renewals and full driving licences online without having to queue up for counter services at the Licensing Offices.