

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on November 18 to noon today (November 19), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 115 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" (www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24, 2023, to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 101 000 samples of food imported from Japan (including 64 754 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 22 562 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Speech by FS at Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit Luncheon (English only) (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit Luncheon today (November 19):

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. And welcome to the Investment Summit luncheon. This morning's programme was replete with opportunity – from macro-investment trends, the future of artificial intelligence and digitalisation, to the vast promise of Asia and the rapidly growing private equity market.

Now, allow me to offer a delicate morsel of insights along with your well-deserved luncheon, with a focus on the economic future of Hong Kong.

You are, no doubt, well briefed on our current economic status, standing and prospects. But let me supplement that with why recent developments, and favourable government policies backed by the staunch support of the Central Authorities, are creating renewed opportunities, fresh promise.

It begins with trade, one of our traditional economic pillars.

International trade centre

Hong Kong has long served as an international shipping and trade centre as well as a re-export hub for China. We have been the prime destination for Mainland and overseas enterprises setting up international headquarters to manage offshore trading and supply chain businesses.

Today's global industry and supply chain is undergoing profound change, driven by a number of trends, including geo-economic fragmentation and the rise of on-shoring and friend-shoring.

Our country is also undergoing remarkable economic transformation. That's why many Mainland companies are establishing manufacturing and supply-chain networks worldwide.

China, however, remains a global industrial giant. It is, after all, the only country in the world to support industry in all its varying categories. It boasts a thriving technological system, with R&D (research and development) expenditure ranking second globally and a quality workforce recognised for its strong work ethic.

So in the foreseeable future, despite the talk of "China plus" strategies, China will continue to maintain a strong foothold in the global industry and supply chain.

For Hong Kong, these changes are bringing new opportunities. As Mainland enterprises go global, they require a wide range of professional services support, from trade financing, logistics, to consulting services on ESG (environmental, social and governance) compliance and other international regulations.

They also need a platform for managing their corporate treasury, logistics, marketing and more in support of their business development and expansion.

These and related areas play into Hong Kong's strengths.

Our professional services are top notch, business and people-to-people networks are comprehensive, and our standards align with international ones.

Our logistics capabilities are also unparalleled, with air connectivity that allows you to reach half the world's population in just five hours. Hong Kong International Airport operates over 1 000 flights a day, connecting 200 destinations, and has been named once again the world's busiest cargo airport for 2023 in terms of total volume. The Three-Runway System, which opens next week, will further reinforce our air superiority.

That's why we set a clear vision for Hong Kong's rise as a high value-added supply-chain management centre. This is not just for Chinese enterprises, but for all companies looking to expand their footprint in Asia.

Financial services

Financial services, another of our economic pillars, is also rife with fresh opportunities.

Of course, we hear misconceptions, from time to time, about our financial services sector, including reports about outflow of funds.

As a matter of fact, international investors continue to take confidence in Hong Kong. And the figures speak volumes about this. Bank deposits in the city, for example, have risen by more than 13 per cent, or US\$250 billion, since the beginning of 2022 till September this year.

Our asset- and wealth-management business also continues to grow, with assets under management reaching US\$4 trillion last year, 30 per cent higher than that in 2018. Investors outside Hong Kong and the Mainland have consistently accounted for more than half of our total assets under management.

So what do these tell us? Hong Kong, as an IFC (international financial

centre), is as vibrant and bustling as ever. The efforts we have been making on all fronts are building a better environment for investments, for businesses to thrive.

In the financial world, Hong Kong's role as a "super connector" is also gaining momentum, linking not just with developed markets, but also emerging markets with diverse backgrounds and cultures. Here, we offer a full range of fundraising options, supported by top global financial institutions and talent. With the expanding Connect Schemes with the Mainland both in terms of breadth and depth across different assets classes, quality issuers from around the world could access both Mainland and international liquidity here.

Shifting global dynamics are creating challenges as well as opportunities. Many Mainland companies aspiring to go global will need to seek global funds to support the development of their overseas businesses. Hong Kong shines as an ideal platform, poised to support these goals and guide these companies on their journey into the global marketplace.

And our vision extends beyond Chinese companies. The Global South, including regions such as ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and the Gulf countries, is experiencing rapid growth, driven by young populations, expanding middle classes, and ambitious national development plans. Companies from these regions are looking to raise capital and expand. In the face of an evolving geopolitical landscape, they are keen to build stronger connections with Hong Kong, particularly with a view to tapping into the vast opportunities in this part of the world.

Innovation and technology

Beyond the two economic pillars, we have a bold vision to develop Hong Kong into an international innovation and technology hub along with sister cities in the Greater Bay Area. To turn this vision into a reality, we need to think big, and think strategically.

We're building on strong foundations. Hong Kong is blessed with world-class scientific research capabilities, a vibrant start-up network and growing technological collaborations in the Greater Bay Area.

We focus on four strategic areas: AI (artificial intelligence) and data analytics, biotech, fintech and new energy, and new materials.

Take biotech as an example. We are setting up a Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Institute in the Lok Ma Chau Loop area on the border with Shenzhen. It will begin operation before year's end and will attract multinational biotech and pharmaceutical companies looking to access the Mainland market.

We are also establishing a primary evaluation system for medicine and medical devices, as part of the efforts to secure, in the long term, the recognition of medicine approved in Hong Kong for use in the Mainland.

Realising our innovation vision demands land. That's why we're developing the Northern Metropolis. This is where the 87-hectare Hong Kong-Shenzhen I&T Park will be located, home to many of the world's most strategic I&T (innovation and technology) enterprises, driving innovation, collaboration, and growth.

And we are seeking to provide for, with the Park, an unimpeded cross-boundary flow of talent, data, bio-samples, and investment. This will turn the Park into a truly unique ecosystem for innovation and technology.

But more than land, strategic companies and talent are the lifeblood of our I&T progress.

That's why we've launched a range of initiatives to attract the best and brightest from around the world. And the results are impressive. Some 100 I&T companies from around the globe have been attracted to Hong Kong, with investments totalling over US\$6 billion and creating more than 17 000 jobs in the next couple of years.

But it's not just about companies – it's also about people. Our talent schemes have been met with an overwhelming response, with nearly 400 000 applications received to date. We've approved some 250 000 of them, and about 160 000 professionals have already arrived in Hong Kong.

Meanwhile, to add to the impetus of our I&T development, we have also set up the HKIC – the Hong Kong Investment Corporation.

As "patient capital", the HKIC has a dual mandate: seeking reasonable financial returns, while enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness and economic vitality through strategic investment.

Through investing and co-investing in projects, it plays a key role of supporting Hong Kong's strategic industries and the development of different parts of the ecosystem in the industry chain, as well as channeling private capital into them.

The HKIC has already concluded a number of exciting projects, from using AI for drug discovery to exporting electric vehicle-charging systems to Thailand. It is helping to drive our innovation agenda forward, and we will be seeing the impact it will make in the years to come.

Concluding remarks

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope I have given you a glimpse into the exciting future that awaits Hong Kong. We are a city that has always thrived on change and challenges, and we are confident that – though the sailing can be fraught with uncertainty, we will as always weather the challenges that lie ahead and emerge stronger and more vibrant.

Under the "one country, two systems" principle, Hong Kong will always remain open and welcoming, harness its singular strength in

internationalisation, and be committed to working together with you all to build a brighter future.

I know you will enjoy today's luncheon and the accompanying fireside chat. Thank you and bon appétit.



[EDB presents book series on national security education to primary and secondary schools \(with photos\)](#)

The Education Bureau (EDB) held the "National Security Education" Book Giving Ceremony at the Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre today (November 19). The Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, presented the book series on national security education to representatives of primary, secondary and special school councils/school heads association, to further support the implementation of national security education in schools.

The four-volume series, edited by Professor Bi Yanying, Vice President of the University of International Relations on the Mainland, covers all key learning stages from primary to secondary schools, and explains the concepts and knowledge of national security in a progressive manner. Professor Bi also travelled from Beijing to attend the ceremony and witness this important moment in person.

During the ceremony, Dr Choi said that national security education is an important part of the school curriculum. The EDB has been adopting a multipronged and co-ordinated approach to support the implementation of national security education in schools and provide teachers with diverse learning and teaching resources.

Dr Choi said that the national security education book series being distributed is well illustrated and well written. It interprets the concepts of national security from a Hong Kong perspective and vividly explains the

essence of national security through various real-life examples. The book series helps students develop the concept of national security, as well as awareness and sense of responsibility to safeguard national security, from an early age in a comprehensive and systematic manner. To further support teachers in effectively utilising the learning and teaching resources to implement national security education, Professor Bi and her team conducted a Seminar on Teaching Strategies and the Use of Learning and Teaching Materials for the Implementation of National Security Education after the book giving ceremony.

Starting today, all primary and secondary schools, including special schools, can collect complimentary copies of the book series on national security education from the EDB at their respective Regional Education Offices, as supplementary learning and teaching resources.



Missing woman in Kwun Tong located

A woman who went missing in Kwun Tong has been located.

Hui Yuen-ching, aged 21, went missing after she left her residence in Yau Lai Estate on October 28. Her family made a report to Police on November 4.

The woman turned up at police station to cancel the missing person

report last night (November 18). She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

Property owner fined over \$12,000 for failing to comply with fire safety direction

An owner was convicted and fined \$12,555 at the Fanling Magistrates' Courts on November 5 for failing to comply with a fire safety direction issued under the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (FS(B)O) (Cap. 572).

The Buildings Department (BD) issued a fire safety direction under section 5(2)(a)(i) of the FS(B)O to the owner of a non-domestic unit in a 44-year-old composite building at Yan Hing Street, Tai Po, requiring the owner to comply with the fire safety construction requirement by providing a fire-rated door at the rear exit of the unit.

Failing to comply with the statutory direction, the owner was prosecuted by the BD and was convicted and fined by the court.

"According to the FS(B)O, failing to comply with a statutory direction issued under the ordinance without reasonable excuse is a serious offence. The BD may instigate prosecution proceedings against the owner", a spokesman for the BD said today (November 19).

Pursuant to section 5(8) of the FS(B)O, any person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with a statutory direction, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000 at present) and to a further fine of \$2,500 for each day of non-compliance. Upon conviction, an application may also be made to the court for a Fire Safety Compliance Order against the owner under section 6(1) of the FS(B)O directing the owner to comply with the requirements of the direction.