

# Collaboration between BDF and HKMA unlocks new CBDC cross-border opportunities (with photo)

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

The Banque de France (BDF) and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) are pleased to announce today (June 27) their collaboration relating to wholesale central bank digital currency (CBDC).

The BDF and the HKMA have been maintaining a close partnership in promoting financial innovation. The latest collaboration is the HKMA's participation in Wave 2 of the European Central Bank (ECB)'s Eurosystem exploratory work (Note 1), marking an important milestone as a major central banking institution outside the Eurosystem participating in the initiative. The two central banking institutions recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which signified a step forward in bilateral cooperation to foster innovation in wholesale CBDC and tokenisation market.

The two central banking institutions will delve into the study of interoperability between their wholesale CBDC infrastructure, i.e. the BDF's DL3S (Note 2) and the HKMA's Project Ensemble Sandbox (Note 3), with the main focus on real-time cross-border and cross-currency payments. The cross-border experiment aims to explore how to optimise settlement efficiency of cross-border transactions, and facilitate interoperability between financial market infrastructures in different jurisdictions.

Under the MoU, the BDF and the HKMA agree to strengthen communication and collaboration, as well as to lay the foundations for further efforts on tokenisation and new technologies.

First Deputy Governor of the BDF Mr Denis Beau said, "As we have set the clear objective to improve cross-border payments, we have the opportunity brought by the Eurosystem exploratory work to collaborate with the HKMA on different use cases for payment versus payment between the tokenised form of the Hong Kong dollar and the Euro. The HKMA's recent announcement for the launch of Project Ensemble was very timely to initiate this cooperation. We look forward to further testing our DL3S platform in this context and hope that together we can facilitate the financial inclusion expected from enhanced cross-border payments."

Deputy Chief Executive of the HKMA Mr Howard Lee said, "It is evident that there is a huge potential for collaboration between France and Hong Kong in various areas. Particularly in the Fintech sector, both the BDF and the HKMA have well proven themselves as pioneers in the field of CBDC. The HKMA announced Project Ensemble early this year to explore innovative financial market infrastructure that will facilitate seamless interbank settlement of tokenised money through wholesale CBDC. With the collaboration between BDF's

DL3S and the HKMA's Project Ensemble Sandbox underway, we look forward to joining hands with the BDF to further explore different cross-border payment solutions and use cases, to promote financial market connectivity and push forward the development of the global tokenisation market."

Note 1: The ECB's Eurosystem exploratory work involves the exploration of new technologies for wholesale central bank money settlement in the form of trials with actual settlement in central bank money and experiments with mock settlement in a test environment. Please refer to the ECB's website ([www.ecb.europa.eu/paym/integration/distributed/exploratory/html/index.en.html](http://www.ecb.europa.eu/paym/integration/distributed/exploratory/html/index.en.html)) for more details.

Note 2: Distributed Ledger for Securities Settlement System. Please refer to the ECB's website ([www.ecb.europa.eu/press/intro/news/ecb.mipnews231213\\_annex2.en.pdf](http://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/intro/news/ecb.mipnews231213_annex2.en.pdf)) for more details on the BDF's Full DLT Interoperability Solution (also known as DL3S).

Note 3: The Project Ensemble Sandbox will further research and test tokenisation use cases that include, among others, settlement of tokenised real world assets (e.g. green bonds, carbon credits, aircraft, electric vehicle charging stations, electronic bills of lading and treasury management). Please refer to the HKMA's Project Ensemble webpage ([www.hkma.gov.hk/eng/key-functions/international-financial-centre/fintech/central-bank-digital-currency](http://www.hkma.gov.hk/eng/key-functions/international-financial-centre/fintech/central-bank-digital-currency)) for more details.



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## [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 June 26 to noon today (June 27), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 204 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html)).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 62 768 samples of food imported from Japan (including 40 637 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 15 292 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

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## **[Works departments receive UK's Martin Barnes Awards \(with photos\)](#)**

The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD), the Drainage

Services Department (DSD) and the Highways Department (HyD) have received Martin Barnes Awards from the New Engineering Contract (NEC) Users' Group of the United Kingdom. An awards presentation ceremony was held by the Group today (June 27) to commend Hong Kong awardees for their excellence in project delivery through collaborative partnering by adopting the NEC form.

The CEDD and the DSD received the Winner Award under the Demonstrating Carbon Dioxide Reduction Initiatives towards Net-zero category and the Recognising Project Excellence and Innovation category respectively. The CEDD and the HyD also received a Runner up Award or Highly Commended Award under various award categories.

Speaking at the awards presentation ceremony, the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works), Mr Ricky Lau, congratulated the works departments on their outstanding achievements and said that the Government's wide adoption of the NEC form in public works projects over the years has enhanced the performance of project implementation.

The Development Bureau piloted the use of the NEC form in public works projects in 2009 and has expanded its application since then. As of today, more than 570 public works contracts, with a total value of over HK\$380 billion, have adopted the NEC form which embraces collaborative partnering between clients and contractors, thereby enhancing project performance.

The Martin Barnes Awards are presented annually by the NEC Users' Group under the Institution of Civil Engineers of the United Kingdom to give recognition to projects, organisations and individuals around the world that have showcased excellence in project delivery through collaborative partnering. This year, over 50 entries from across the world participated in this event.

The full list of the awardees was announced in the United Kingdom on June 21 and is available on the website of the NEC Users' Group at [www.neccontract.com/projects/awards](http://www.neccontract.com/projects/awards).





## [Use of Elderly Health Care Vouchers at First Affiliated Hospital of Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou to start tomorrow](#)

The Department of Health (DH) today (June 27) announced that the coverage of the Elderly Health Care Voucher (EHCV) will be extended to the First Affiliated Hospital, Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou (FAH-SYSU) starting from tomorrow (June 28). This will be another service point where Hong Kong elderly persons eligible for EHCVs can use them for outpatient healthcare services in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) on top of the two current service points operated by the University of Hong Kong-Shenzhen (HKU-SZ) Hospital at its hospital and the Huawei Li Zhi Yuan Community Health Service Center (CHC). Starting from the same day, eligible elderly persons have to register with eHealth before they can use EHCVs at the designated GBA medical institutions.

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The FAH-SYSU is the first medical institution providing integrated services to launch the relevant arrangements under the EHCV GBA Pilot Scheme (Pilot Scheme). Starting from tomorrow, elderly persons will be able to use EHCVs to pay for outpatient healthcare services provided by the following 15 designated departments of the FAH-SYSU: Department of Internal Medicine, Department of Surgery, Department of Gynecology, Department of Ophthalmology, Department of Otolaryngology, Department of Stomatology, Department of Dermatology, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Department of Laboratory Medicine, Department of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Department of Neurology, Department of Cardiovascular Medicine, Department of Nutrition, Health Management Center and Department of Emergency Medicine.

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Starting from tomorrow, elderly persons can undergo identity verification and registration at the counter on the west side of the Medical

Service Center, 1/F, Building No.1 of the FAH-SYSU. Elderly persons can also make appointments via the FAH-SYSU official mobile application "Appointment Booking for Hong Kong Elderly Health Care Voucher" or through the self-service machine located in the FAH-SYSU. Upon attending a medical appointment, elderly persons should first visit in person the west side of the Medical Service Center, 1/F, Building No.1 of the FAH-SYSU, and show a valid Hong Kong Identity Card or Certificate of Exemption issued by the Immigration Department to go through relevant procedures and identity verification. Elderly persons can then make registration at the counter on-site or through the appointment platform. After receiving outpatient services at the designated departments, elderly persons can use EHCVs to pay the relevant fees at the relevant cashier of the department (e.g. the Outpatient Cashier located on 4/F, Building No.1) according to the instructions from the FAH-SYSU.

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¶¶¶¶¶The fees for the healthcare services provided by the FAH-SYSU are denominated in Renminbi. The FAH-SYSU will make EHCV claims for elderly persons, and the EHCV amount deducted in Hong Kong dollars will be calculated according to a monthly updated voucher conversion factor under the EHCV Scheme. The FAH-SYSU will display the monthly voucher conversion factor at the abovementioned cashier offices for the elderly's reference.

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¶¶¶¶¶A spokesman for the DH reminded, "Elderly persons cannot use EHCVs together with national medical insurance to pay the fees of the same healthcare service encounter. In addition, the scope of using EHCVs on the Mainland is the same as that in Hong Kong, which does not include inpatient services, prepaid healthcare services and day surgery procedures. EHCVs cannot be used solely for the purchase of goods, medication, medical equipment or products, nor can they be redeemed for cash."

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¶¶¶¶¶The arrangements for shared use of EHCVs between spouses, as well as the EHCV Pilot Reward Scheme (Pilot Reward Scheme), apply equally to the Pilot Scheme. For the FAH-SYSU, the arrangements of the Pilot Reward Scheme are applicable to the following Departments: Department of Internal Medicine, Department of Surgery, Department of Gynecology, Department of Ophthalmology, Department of Stomatology, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Department of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Health Management Center and Department of Emergency Medicine. Elderly persons who use EHCVs for outpatient services on health check, preventive and follow-up/monitoring of long-term conditions provided by these nine designated departments of the hospital can accumulate their EHCV spending for receiving a Reward.

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¶¶¶¶¶Moreover, also starting from tomorrow, Hong Kong elderly persons using EHCVs at medical institutions in the GBA have to register with eHealth. The relevant arrangements apply to the HKU-SZ Hospital, Huawei Li Zhi Yuan CHC, the FAH-SYSU, and the remaining six pilot medical institutions that will launch relevant arrangements under the Pilot Scheme in future. After joining eHealth, elderly persons can make use of its mobile app to check their EHCV balance and usage record, as well as access anytime important information such as their medications, allergies and adverse drug reactions stored in the eHealth app. This allows better record-keeping and management of their health

and EHCV usage, and facilitates continuity of care provided by healthcare professionals.

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ã€€ã€€In February this year, the Government included five medical institutions providing integrated services (all with dental services) and two dental medical institutions in the Pilot Scheme. The Government is actively carrying out preparatory work with the remaining six medical institutions included in the Pilot Scheme, and is making good progress. These six medical institutions will progressively launch the relevant arrangements starting from the third quarter. Details will be announced in due course.

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ã€€ã€€Launched in 2009, the EHCV Scheme currently subsidises eligible Hong Kong elderly persons aged 65 and above with an annual EHCV amount of \$2,000 (with the accumulation limit set at \$8,000) for them to choose private primary healthcare services that best suit their health needs. Members of the public may browse the EHCV Scheme website ([www.hcv.gov.hk](http://www.hcv.gov.hk)) or call the EHCV Scheme hotline (2838 2311) for information on the EHCV Scheme.

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## [Appeal for information on missing man in Tin Sum \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (June 27) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Tin Sum.

Kwan Yuet-pui, aged 35, went missing after he was last seen in Hin Keng Estate on June 25 afternoon. His caretaker made a report to Police yesterday (June 26).

He is about 1.8 metres tall, 72 kilograms in weight and of fat build. He has a round face with yellow complexion and short black hair. He was last seen wearing a white short-sleeved top, trousers and carrying a backpack.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Persons Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1176 or 5239 7701 or email to [rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk](mailto:rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk), or contact any police station.

