

International experts and delegations from Belt and Road Initiative and ASEAN member states attend Fire Asia 2024 (with photos)

About 600 experts and delegates in emergency response, paramedic services, medical professions and fire engineering from various countries and regions are taking part in the Fire Asia 2024 international conference being held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre from today (July 10) to July 12.

Delegations of the Belt and Road Initiative and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations from 19 countries, including the Director General of the General Administration of Civil Protection, Ministry of Interior, Egypt; and heads or senior officials of emergency or fire departments in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Saudi Arabia and Singapore were invited to attend.

The three-day conference is one of the mega events being held in Hong Kong in July. Themed "Collaboration and Technology – Better Prepare the Community for Emergency" this year, the conference has brought together global fire and emergency professionals to gain invaluable insights into fire safety and groundbreaking research from eminent speakers worldwide, striving to promote the development of the industry. The conference also exemplified the international co-operation and exchanges that could make a difference, regionally and globally, and to tell the China story and the Hong Kong story well.

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki; the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung; and the Director of Fire Services, Mr Andy Yeung, officiated at the opening ceremony this morning.

Addressing the ceremony, Mr Chan said, "Emergency preparedness is essential to protecting an economy and its people from the impact of wide-ranging disasters, crises and other emergencies. An effective emergency management system helps mitigate disruptions to essential services, economic stability and social order. In today's interconnected world, the threats of emergencies and disasters could be cross-border by nature. Regional and international teamwork play an important role in reducing risks and enhancing resilience."

Also speaking at the ceremony, Mr Yeung said that it is crucial for fire and emergency professionals to adopt an innovative approach to addressing emergency situations. The Hong Kong Fire Services Department (HKFSD) has been actively using modern technology to boost the department's emergency response capabilities. Innovative solutions, such as robots, drones and self-developed artificial intelligence-powered systems to cope with emergencies, have

significantly enhanced the effectiveness and safety of the department's work.

Fire Asia 2024 is jointly organised by the Institution of Fire Engineers (Hong Kong Branch), the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (Building Services Division and Fire Division), the China Hong Kong Ambulance Service Institute and the China Hong Kong Fire Protection Association, supported by the HKFSD and the Hong Kong Tourism Board, and funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. The conference covers various topics, including new approaches to disaster management and fire safety measures, collaboration in the Greater Bay Area and emergency preparedness in the Belt and Road region, as well as the latest research in fire engineering and emergency medical services.

