

Financial Secretary to present Budget

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) will hold a meeting on February 28 (Wednesday) at 11am in the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. The Appropriation Bill 2024 will be introduced into the Council for the First Reading and the Second Reading. When moving the Second Reading of the Bill, the Financial Secretary will outline the 2024-25 Budget. The Second Reading debate on the Bill will be adjourned.

During the meeting, Members will also ask the Government 22 questions on various policy areas, all of which require written replies.

The agenda of the above meeting can be obtained via the LegCo Website (www.legco.gov.hk). Members of the public can watch or listen to the meeting via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meeting at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, February 26, 2024 is 105 (down 0.1 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, February 24, 2024 was 105.1 (up 0.1 against last Friday's index).

Capacity Building Training on Retro-commissioning of Association of Southeast Asian Nations held in Hong Kong (with photos)

The Capacity Building Training on Retro-commissioning (RCx) of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is being held in Hong Kong today and tomorrow (February 26 and 27). More than 20 experts and delegates

from eight ASEAN member states are gathering to exchange valuable experiences, technical knowledge and share insights on RCx.

Delivering a welcoming speech by video, the Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, said that RCx plays a vital role in the periodic assessment of the energy performance of a building. It identifies areas for operational improvements, thereby achieving energy savings and a reduction of operating costs. By integrating RCx into energy efficiency strategies, significant progress can be made towards a more sustainable and energy-efficient ASEAN region.

Mr Tse pointed out that Hong Kong is striving to achieve carbon neutrality before 2050 and is pursuing the reduction of electricity consumption in commercial buildings by 30 per cent to 40 per cent, and that of residential buildings by 20 per cent to 30 per cent from the 2015 level by 2050, aiming to achieve these targets halfway by 2035.

He added that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government is implementing the energy saving and green buildings strategy in Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 with a multipronged approach, such as proposing amendments to the Buildings Energy Efficiency Ordinance to extend the scope of regulation to more types of buildings, and strengthening regional co-operation on the promotion of retro-commissioning in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

In the workshop, the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services, Mr Eric Pang, shared the HKSAR Government's latest efforts in achieving carbon neutrality by enhancing energy efficiency and savings in buildings. He thanked ASEAN member states for joining the training and encouraged co-operation among ASEAN member states on retro-commissioning.

The workshop, which is the first energy-related ASEAN project held in Hong Kong, is organised by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department with support from the Economic and Technical Co-operation (ECOTECH) Work Programme under the ASEAN-Hong Kong Free Trade Agreement. The ECOTECH Work Programme has supported more than 10 projects in pursuit of mutual benefits between ASEAN and Hong Kong, benefitting around 4 000 participants from Hong Kong, ASEAN and other regions.



Import of poultry meat and products from Duplin County of State of North Carolina in US suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (February 26) that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) about an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Duplin County of the State of North Carolina in the United States (US), the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the area with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 37 770 tonnes of chilled and frozen poultry meat and about 83.84 million poultry eggs from the US last year.

"The CFS has contacted the American authority over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the WOAH and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreak. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

Temporary suspension of LCSD's Mobile Library 3, 11 and 12 services

Mobile Libraries 3, 11 and 12 will suspend services during designated periods in March for routine maintenance, a spokesman for the Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (February 26).

Mobile Library 12 will suspend services from March 4 to 16. The affected service points are Kam Tsin Village and Tung Hing Road Car Park in Sheung Shui; Ka Fuk Estate and Cheong Shing Court in Fanling; Lei Muk Shue Estate, Bayview Garden, Sham Tseng Market Carpark, Tsuen King Circuit Playground and Cheung Shan Estate in Tsuen Wan; Tai Wo Hau Estate and Kwai Luen Estate in Kwai Chung; Fu Cheong Estate in Sham Shui Po; and Kwong Fuk Estate in Tai Po. For enquiries about Mobile Library 12 services, please call 2479 1055.

Mobile Library 3 will suspend services from March 11 to 16. The affected service points are Shan King Estate, Siu Hong Court, Sam Shing Estate and Fu Tai Estate in Tuen Mun; Kingswood Country Club and Tin Ching Estate in Tin

Shui Wai; and Fairview Park in Yuen Long. For enquiries about Mobile Library 3 services, please call 2450 1857.

Mobile Library 11 will suspend services from March 18 to 28. The affected service points are Cho Yiu Chuen, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Shing East Estate and Lai Yiu Estate in Kwai Chung; Po Tin Estate in Tuen Mun; Sun Chui Estate and Kwong Yuen Estate in Sha Tin; Easeful Court and Cheung Ching Estate in Tsing Yi; Wan Tau Tong Estate and Tai Yuen Estate in Tai Po; and Tin Wah Estate in Tin Shui Wai. For enquiries about Mobile Library 11 services, please call 2479 1055.

Readers are welcome to use other public libraries during the service suspension periods. They may also renew library materials by telephoning 2698 0002 or 2827 2833, or via www.hkpl.gov.hk.