

# Special traffic arrangements for football match at Hong Kong Stadium

Police will implement special traffic arrangements in So Kon Po and Causeway Bay to facilitate a football match to be held at the Hong Kong Stadium on December 20 (Friday).

## A. Traffic arrangements at the commencement of the event

Depending on the crowd and traffic conditions, the following traffic arrangements will be implemented from about 5.30pm:

### Road closure

- Caroline Hill Road between its eastern junction with Leighton Road and Cotton Path;
- Part of the traffic lane of Caroline Hill Road between Eastern Hospital Road and Cotton Path;
- Westbound Hysan Avenue between Yun Ping Road and Hoi Ping Road;
- Stadium Path; and
- Lee Garden Road between Lan Fong Road and Hysan Avenue, except for green minibuses (GMBs).

### Traffic diversions

- Caroline Hill Road between its western junction with Leighton Road and Stadium Path will be re-routed one way southbound;
- Eastern Hospital Road between Stadium Path and Tung Lo Wan Road will be re-routed one way northbound;
- Caroline Hill Road between its western junction with Leighton Road and Link Road will have two lanes for traffic entering Caroline Hill Road from Hoi Ping Road;
- Hysan Avenue between Leighton Road and Hoi Ping Road will be re-routed one way eastbound;
- Eastbound Hysan Avenue will have two lanes for traffic turning right to Hoi Ping Road;
- Vehicles leaving the private driveway of Lee Garden One must turn left to eastbound Hysan Avenue;
- Traffic along Yun Ping Road cannot turn left to westbound Hysan Avenue, and vehicles will be diverted to Lan Fong Road and Pak Sha Road;
- If necessary, traffic along northbound Link Road downhill to northbound Caroline Hill Road must turn left to westbound Leighton Road; and
- If necessary, traffic along Lan Fong Road cannot turn left to southbound Lee Garden Road, and vehicles will be diverted to northbound Lee Garden Road, Foo Ming Street and southbound Percival Street, except for GMBs.

### Passenger alighting arrangements

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The drop-off zone for taxis and private cars will be arranged to set down passengers at the locations specified below:

- Western kerbside of Caroline Hill Road near the Disciplined Service Sports and Recreation Club;
- Northern kerbside of Cotton Path; and
- Southern kerbside (taxi drop-off zone) and northern kerbside (private car drop-off zone) of Eastern Hospital Road near the main entrance of Hong Kong Stadium.

#### B. Traffic arrangements on conclusion of the event

Depending on the crowd and traffic conditions, the following traffic arrangements will be implemented from about 9.30pm:

##### Road closure

- Caroline Hill Road;
- Eastern Hospital Road between Caroline Hill Road and Cotton Path;
- Hoi Ping Road;
- Sunning Road, except for vehicles exit from Lee Garden Three Car Park;
- If necessary, Cotton Path, Leighton Road, and northbound Link Road (downhill), except for vehicles heading for No. 1, 3, 5 and 7 on Link Road.

##### Traffic diversions

- Before the end of the event, vehicles may be permitted to leave the South China Athletic Association car parks by turning right at the western exit to northbound Caroline Hill Road;
- Before the end of the event, vehicles may be permitted to exit buildings on Eastern Hospital Road by turning right to northbound Eastern Hospital Road;
- Traffic along westbound Leighton Road cannot enter Caroline Hill Road for Link Road, and vehicles will be diverted via Wong Nai Chung Road and Broadwood Road; and
- When Leighton Road is closed, traffic along westbound Causeway Road will be diverted via Irving Street; traffic along eastbound Morrison Hill Road will be diverted via Canal Road West; traffic along southbound Percival Street must turn right to westbound Leighton Road; and traffic along southbound Canal Road East cannot turn left to Leighton Road.

#### C. Traffic arrangements throughout the event

##### Prohibition for learner drivers

From 5pm to 11pm, learner drivers cannot enter Tung Lo Wan Road from Causeway Road. The following roads will also be prohibited to all learner drivers:

- Westbound Leighton Road;
- Percival Street south of Hennessy Road;
- Caroline Hill Road;
- Link Road;
- Stadium Path;
- Cotton Path;
- Eastern Hospital Road; and
- Eastern Hospital Road service road.

#### Suspension of parking spaces

All on-street parking spaces on the following roads will be suspended from 5pm to 11pm:

- Stadium Path;
- Northbound Caroline Hill Road between Stadium Path and Cotton Path;
- Hoi Ping Road;
- Sunning Road; and
- Eastern Hospital Road service road.

#### Restrictions on access to / exit from car parks

If necessary, all car parks along Caroline Hill Road, Eastern Hospital Road, Stadium Path and Cotton Path may be closed at short notice.

Vehicles in car parks within the road closure area may not be permitted to leave during the road closure period.

All vehicles parked illegally during the implementation of the above special traffic arrangements will be towed away without prior warning, and may be subject to multiple ticketing.

Actual implementation of traffic arrangements will depend on the traffic and crowd conditions in the areas. Members of the public are advised to exercise tolerance and patience and take heed of instructions of the Police on site.

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## [Invest Hong Kong fully supports blood donation drive \(with photos\)](#)

The Director-General of Investment Promotion of Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK), Ms Alpha Lau, and Associate Directors-General of Investment Promotion of InvestHK Mr Arnold Lau and Ms Jessica Cheng, together with more than 30 staff from the department, visited the Hong Kong Red Cross Blood

Transfusion Service Central District Donor Centre today (December 18) to participate in a blood donation drive, showing their support for patients in need of blood transfusions.

Ms Lau said, "With the festive season approaching, people are busy preparing for holidays or other festive activities, leading to a decline in blood donations during this period. At the same time, the demand for blood remains high, making blood donation particularly critical during the holidays. Companies are placing greater emphasis on corporate social responsibility (CSR). In addition to business considerations and financial performance, many local and international companies have integrated ethical practices into their decision-making processes. Therefore, while attracting businesses and investment as well as talent to Hong Kong, organising this blood donation drive not only helps save lives and fulfils our colleagues' desire to contribute to society but also aligns with the department's CSR goals."

She continued, "Each donation can help three patients. There is no substitute for blood, and the shelf life of blood is limited. The Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service needs to collect 650 units of blood daily to provide sufficient blood to all hospitals across the territory, enabling patients in need to receive timely treatment. Therefore, it is of particular importance for citizens to donate blood voluntarily on a regular basis."

Staff from InvestHK shared that the entire blood donation process was quick and painless. InvestHK encourages more companies and organisations to organise group blood donations to save lives and spread the community spirit of care and giving.

Blood donor centres are available across the city. Mobile blood donation teams and blood donation vehicles also visit various districts regularly, making it convenient for the public to donate blood. Citizens can call the donor centres directly or make an appointment through the "HK Blood" mobile application.





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## LCQ3: Supporting development of Cantonese opera sector

Following is a question by the Hon Kenneth Fok and a reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law, in the Legislative Council today (December 18):

Question:

It has been reported that Sunbeam Theatre in North Point, an important performance venue for Cantonese opera, will close down in March next year, and by that time, the sector will face problems such as finding new performance and rehearsal venues, as well as how to rehouse and provide training for Cantonese opera practitioners, which will bring about a significant impact on the stable development of the Cantonese opera sector. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that after the closure of Sunbeam Theatre, there will be no performance venue for Cantonese opera of comparable scale under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department in the district, whether the Government has plans to collaborate with the business sector to jointly construct a permanent performance venue for the development of Cantonese opera; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether the Government will consider providing support to Cantonese opera practitioners, including further according priority to Cantonese opera troupes in arranging venues for their performance, so as to sustain the living of Cantonese opera practitioners; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) as it is learnt that in the light of the impending closure of Sunbeam Theatre, business operators in the neighbourhood do not renew their tenancies out of worries over the loss of patronage from opera-goers, whether the Government has plans to expeditiously identify a new venue in the district

for performance by Cantonese opera troupes which originally perform at Sunbeam Theatre, so as to preserve the long-established "Cantonese opera economy" in the district?

Reply:

President,

Cantonese opera is one of the important forms of Hong Kong's traditional arts and culture. It is also the first world-class intangible cultural heritage (ICH) item in Hong Kong. The Government attaches great importance to the development of Cantonese opera and has all along been providing active support to the transmission, study, promotion and continuous development of Cantonese opera through various ways, including (1) developing performance venues for Cantonese opera; (2) nurturing Cantonese opera professionals, promoting creative works and preserving traditions; (3) promoting Cantonese opera education, audience building and community participation; and (4) preserving the essence of Cantonese opera and showcasing the treasures of our cultural heritage.

To help develop Cantonese opera as a unique local culture and art form more effectively, the Government set up the Cantonese Opera Advisory Committee in 2004 to advise the Government on matters relating to the development of Cantonese opera in Hong Kong. In 2005, the Government also established the Cantonese Opera Development Fund (CODF) to support projects and activities that facilitate the preservation, promotion and development of Cantonese opera. Since its establishment, the CODF has granted about \$200 million to support over 1 200 Cantonese opera projects, providing assistance to the Cantonese opera sector in various aspects, including performances of traditional plays and new creation plays, cultural exchanges, arts education and community promotion, children/youth training and performances, professional training, research, preservation and publication projects.

In the Blueprint for Arts and Culture and Creative Industries Development (the Blueprint) promulgated on November 26 this year, we have formulated four strategic directions, one of which being "promote profound traditional Chinese culture and develop cultural contents with Hong Kong character". Under this direction, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) proposed to promote the cultural characteristics of Lingnan legacy and to foster the safeguarding and transmission of ICH. One of the concrete measures is to support high-quality development of Cantonese opera and collaborate with other cities in the Greater Bay Area to nurture a contemporary Cantonese opera culture which also inherits traditional characteristics.

My consolidated reply to the questions raised by the Hon Kenneth Fok is as follows:

The Sunbeam Theatre was opened in the 1970s. Apart from film screenings, the theatre stages Cantonese opera and other types of programmes such as theatre performances. Over the past few decades, the Sunbeam Theatre has

provided much entertainment to people of Hong Kong and has gradually developed into an important venue for Cantonese opera performances. We understand that the Cantonese opera sector as well as members of the public are not only saddened by the impending closure of the Sunbeam Theatre early next year but also concerned about the availability of performance venues for Cantonese opera. In fact, discussions about whether the Sunbeam Theatre would continue to operate started as early as 2005. While operating the theatre or not was a commercial consideration, the Government back then was well aware of the Cantonese opera sector's concern over the shortage of suitable venues, particularly when the Sunbeam Theatre no longer exists. Hence, the Government pressed ahead with various works projects over the past decade or so. Funds were allocated to construct a number of public venues of various scales specifically for Cantonese opera and other xiqu performances. These venues, which include the Yau Ma Tei Theatre (commissioned in 2012), the Auditorium and rehearsal facilities of the Ko Shan Theatre New Wing (commissioned in 2014) and the Grand Theatre and Tea House Theatre of the Xiqu Centre at the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) (commissioned in 2019), have provided additional 2 000 seats as compared with that over a decade ago, thereby easing the problem of inadequate performance venues. In addition to increasing the number of quality performance venues for Cantonese opera, these venues make more facilities available for nurturing Cantonese opera talents, rehearsing and training, building audiences and promoting education.

Meanwhile, the Government has introduced a priority venue hiring policy for Cantonese opera performances. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) also implements special booking arrangements for local professional Cantonese opera troupes at five of its major performance venues, reserving a total of 70 days of time slots each year for Cantonese opera performances. Cantonese opera troupes may also hire other performance venues managed by the LCSD for performances.

Through the Venue Partnership Scheme, the LCSD has been fostering partnership between its performance venues and performing arts groups/organisations (including Cantonese opera organisations) with the objectives of enhancing the artistic image and characteristics of the venue and its partners, as well as enlarging the audience base. The current round of the Venue Partnership Scheme runs from April 2022 until March 2026 with four Cantonese opera organisations selected as venue partners.

With the enhanced transport network in Hong Kong, these quality performance venues are all located near MTR stations and convenient to members of the public from different districts. We will collaborate with the LCSD, the WKCD and the Cantonese opera sector to step up publicity, so as to attract more people to visit these performance venues for quality Cantonese opera performances.

As I mentioned just now, the Government has been supporting the development of Cantonese opera through diversified channels and means, and it is vitally important that we clearly understand the sector's present needs. Thus, starting from end 2022, the CSTB conducted an opinion survey with the



two Cantonese opera-related advisory committees on the major aspects of development of Cantonese opera. Committee members in general considered that "training of playwrights", "artists", "building young audiences" and "enhancing publicity" are the most important and urgent in promoting the development of Cantonese opera. Subsequently, we set up joint subcommittees under the committees in 2023 to follow up on the discussions, so as to enable the two committees to explore further directions of strategic development and propose specific measures. Committee members and the Cantonese opera sector agreed that the future development of Cantonese opera should focus on encouraging quality performances, while tradition and innovation should go hand in hand. Building on existing foundations, the committees are now actively exploring the introduction of a new funding project in the form of a pilot scheme to tie in with and achieve the objective of supporting high-quality development of Cantonese opera as set out in the Blueprint.

The Government will continue to keep an eye on the needs of the Cantonese opera sector and the general public, review the needs of the development of Cantonese opera in Hong Kong at a suitable time, and strive to provide the sector with adequate and appropriate venues. We will also maintain close communication with the Cantonese opera sector and, having regard to their needs, formulate relevant venue usage and hiring policies. The Government will support the transmission and development of Cantonese opera in various aspects, with a view to promoting Chinese culture.

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## **LCQ5: Helping enterprises leverage artificial intelligence technologies**

Following is a question by the Hon Dominic Lee and a reply by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, in the Legislative Council today (December 18):

Question:

There are views that while various places across the globe have been actively developing industries related to artificial intelligence (AI) in recent years, Hong Kong enterprises still face problems such as geographical restrictions and insufficient funds in applying AI technologies. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as it has been reported that in July this year, the developer of ChatGPT, an AI tool, restricted the provision of application programming interface services to regions including Hong Kong, whether the Government has discussed with the developer the lifting of the restriction; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;



(2) given that the Government launched the Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (AISS) in October this year to subsidise eligible enterprises to make the best use of the computing power of the AI Supercomputing Centre to achieve more breakthroughs in AI scientific research and applications, of the total number of AISS applications received so far; whether the Government will provide technical support to the funded enterprises and extend AISS to cover small and medium enterprises and associations, so as to enhance their AI application capabilities and market competitiveness; and

(3) as there are views that Mainland cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area have advantages in AI development, whether the Government has formulated specific measures to assist Hong Kong enterprises in strengthening their cooperation with the institutions in these cities in the field of AI technologies, and to provide development opportunities for local AI start-ups; if so, of the timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In respect of the question raised by the Hon Dominic Lee, my reply is as follows:

(1) Hong Kong is a free market economy. We welcome enterprises from around the world to run businesses in Hong Kong and provide diversified services and products to the local market, including ChatGPT from the United States. On the other hand, we respect the marketing strategies and commercial arrangements of individual enterprises regarding their products in different markets.

In recent years, various large language models (LLMs) emerge, with numerous enterprises in Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas offering different generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) applications. With the support of the InnoHK research cluster, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI), formed by research teams of local universities, is dedicated to the development of GenAI technologies and LLMs based on local databases. It is also in the process of devising a GenAI document processing application. Over 40 bureaux and departments are participating in the internal trial use programme.

With the advance in artificial intelligence (AI) technology and more application scenarios, we anticipate that more AI products with competitive edges catering to the needs of the local market and different sectors will be made available in Hong Kong.

(2) The Legislative Council has approved \$3 billion for the Government to put in place a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Scheme), mainly to subsidise local universities, research institutes and AI-related enterprises in leveraging the high-performance computing services of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC).

Since the launch of the Scheme in October this year, Cyberport has

received around 10 applications. An independent committee appointed by the Government has conducted initial assessment on the first batch of applications. Upon completion of further vetting, we expect the approved projects to finalise their planning and be commenced soon.

The organisations subsidised under the Scheme will not only receive financial support, but also benefit from the innovative platform offered by Cyberport as a technology park that pools computing power, technology and talents together. It will bridge the supply and demand sides of AI, enabling product innovations and facilitating the convergence of technology transformation and application scenarios. While ordinary enterprises or organisations are unlikely to require the high-performance computing power of the AISC or apply the LLMs so derived directly, they could take advantage of the thriving AI ecosystem and gain access to more technology products that respond to market needs.

(3) Hong Kong is highly competitive in the field of AI. Our research foundation is strong, as evident by the top global rankings in AI and data science attained by a number of local universities. The AIR@InnoHK research cluster focussing on AI and robotic technologies has established 15 research and development laboratories (including HKGAI) and attracted top-notch global talents. The Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport are also home to more than 800 AI-related enterprises, drawing over a hundred AI enterprises to land this year, thereby fuelling Hong Kong as an AI powerhouse.

Under "One Country, Two Systems", Hong Kong is endowed with the distinctive advantages of converging both Mainland and international data, creating a favourable environment for strengthening our AI-related collaboration with the Mainland (particularly the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA)). Specifically, we signed the "Co-operation Agreement on Technology and Innovation Exchange between Guangdong and Hong Kong" with the Department of Science and Technology of the Guangdong Province in March 2023 to further deepen technology and innovation exchanges as well as bolster collaborative innovation of industries, academia and research between the two places. The Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme jointly implemented by the Guangdong and Hong Kong governments has also been encouraging co-operation between universities, research institutions and technology enterprises from both places in technology areas (including AI), and promoting work on high technology and the transformation of scientific and technological achievements, with a view to enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of enterprises in both places.

We will continue to foster collaboration on innovation and technology between Hong Kong and Mainland GBA cities, and encourage our local enterprises to tap into the opportunities in the GBA and expand into Mainland markets.

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# Government welcomes passage of Inland Revenue (Amendment) (Tax Deductions for Leased Premises Reinstatement and Allowances for Buildings and Structures) Bill 2024

The Government welcomed the passage of the Inland Revenue (Amendment) (Tax Deductions for Leased Premises Reinstatement and Allowances for Buildings and Structures) Bill 2024 by the Legislative Council today (December 18). The Bill gives effect to two enhancement measures for deduction of expenses under profits tax in the 2024-25 Budget, which will take effect from the year of assessment 2024/25, including:

1. introducing a tax deduction for expenses incurred for reinstating the condition of leased premises to their original condition (reinstatement cost); and
2. removing the time limit for claiming annual allowances in respect of industrial/commercial buildings or structures.

A Government spokesman said, "Taxpayers only need to meet simple and clear conditions to claim tax deduction for the reinstatement cost. Removing the time limit for claiming annual allowances in respect of industrial/commercial buildings or structures will enable taxpayers to enjoy the same tax treatment when purchasing old buildings as when purchasing new ones. Both measures will alleviate the tax burden of taxpayers and enhance the business environment."

The Amendment Ordinance will be published in the Gazette on December 27. Relevant information and frequently asked questions and answers have been uploaded to the Inland Revenue Department website ([www.ird.gov.hk](http://www.ird.gov.hk)) for reference by the public.