

## [FS begins visit to Davos, Switzerland \(with photos/video\)](#)

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, yesterday (January 15, Davos time) arrived in Davos, Switzerland and began his programme at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting.

Mr Chan, accompanied by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, held bilateral meetings with political and business leaders attending the WEF Annual Meeting, introducing to them the latest developments and prospects in Hong Kong, and promoting the city's new advantages and development opportunities.

Among the parties whom Mr Chan met was the Minister of Finance of Saudi Arabia, Mr Mohammed Al-Jadaan. They discussed the prospects of deepening financial cooperation between Hong Kong and the Middle East. Mr Chan pointed out that since his visit to the Middle East two years ago, Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia have achieved encouraging progress in financial cooperation. This includes the Hong Kong Stock Exchange having added the Saudi Exchange as a recognised Stock Exchange last year; the listing of Asia Pacific's first Saudi Arabia exchange-traded fund; and the successful hosting of the inaugural PRIORITY Asia Summit by the Future Investment Initiative. Chan emphasised that Hong Kong, with its unique advantages under the "one country, two systems", serves as an international financial centre connecting the Mainland and the world. He welcomed Saudi Arabia's capital and enterprises to utilise Hong Kong as a high-quality platform to expand into the Mainland and the Asian markets. He also looked forward to enhancing two-way financial and business cooperation with Saudi Arabia.

Mr Chan also met with the Vice President of Nigeria, Mr Kashim Shettima, and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest, such as global economic development.

Mr Chan also met with representatives of two companies engaged in fintech and artificial intelligence (AI) respectively. One is the issuer of the world's second largest stablecoin. Mr Chan stated that since the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government announced the Policy Statement on the Development of Virtual Assets in Hong Kong in 2022, the market response has been positive, with many digital assets and third-generation Internet companies having settled in Hong Kong. He said that Hong Kong is pressing ahead with developing digital assets in a prudent and orderly manner, and is consulting the public on regulating stablecoins with a view to setting an appropriate regulatory framework and promoting the responsible and sustainable development of the industry. He welcomed fiat-based stablecoin companies to set their foot in Hong Kong to provide more innovative and convenient financial services to the community.

In addition, he also met with the founder of an Israeli unicorn in AI.

Mr Chan pointed out that Hong Kong has strong scientific research abilities, and has put in substantial resources to develop AI as an industry, including the establishment of an AI Supercomputing Centre, and promoting orderly cross-boundary data flow, etc. They have provided support in computing power, data and other elements for the development of AI in Hong Kong. Mr Chan welcomed relevant companies to make use of Hong Kong as a platform to open up the Asian market.

In the evening, Mr Chan attended the welcome reception hosted by the WEF. He will continue his programme in Davos today (January 16, Davos time).



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## Missing woman in Yuen Long located

A woman who went missing in Yuen Long has been located.

Ling Tsui-ying, aged 71, went missing after she was last seen at a care centre on Yuen Long Tai Hang Street yesterday (January 14) morning. Staff of the care centre made a report to Police on the same day.

The woman was located on Yuen Long Tai Hang Street this evening (January 15). She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

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## CFS finds Salmonella in sample of salty chicken

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (January 15) that a sample of salty chicken was found to contain a pathogen, Salmonella. The CFS is following up on the case.

"The CFS collected the above-mentioned sample from a booth at an exhibition in Wan Chai for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme, the booth number was Booth 3B15 of Friendship Rainbow Company Limited at the Hong Kong Food Festival. The test result showed the presence of Salmonella in 25 grams of the sample, exceeding the criterion of the Microbiological Guidelines for Food which states that Salmonella should not be detected in 25g of a ready-to-eat food sample," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the above irregularity and instructed it to recall the relevant food product. Members of the public may call its hotline at 5708 1363 during office hours for enquiries about the recall. The CFS is also tracing the source and distribution of the product concerned. Prosecution will be instituted should there be sufficient evidence.

For the sake of prudence, the CFS appealed to members of the public who had purchased salty chicken from the above-mentioned booth at the exhibition held from December 23 to 27, 2023 not to consume them. If symptoms develop after consuming the food, they should seek medical advice as soon as possible.

According to section 54 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132), all food available for sale in Hong Kong, locally

produced or imported, should be fit for human consumption. An offender is subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

"Salmonella infection may cause fever and gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea. The effects on infants, young children, the elderly and people with a weak immune system could be more severe and may even lead to death," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health. Investigation is ongoing.

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## **Sales network and bulk order arrangement for designated bags and designated labels announced**

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (January 15) announced that, in order to facilitate the public to purchase designated bags and labels for the implementation of municipal solid waste (MSW) charging on 1 April this year, the EPD has been setting up a territory-wide retail network, covering approximately 3 000 retail points including supermarkets, convenience stores, pharmacies and online platforms.

The EPD has signed contracts with major chain retailers. Starting from the second half of January to February, designated bags and labels of different sizes will be available for sale at the retail locations and online platforms. Details of the retail points have been uploaded to the dedicated website on MSW charging ([www.mswcharging.gov.hk](http://www.mswcharging.gov.hk)) today and will be updated as appropriate.

A spokesperson for the EPD said: "To promote waste reduction and reuse, we encourage retailers selling designated bags to place some single designated bags at the checkout counter to replace plastic shopping bags, with a view to achieving the effect of 'one bag for two uses'. Retailers providing this service will be listed on the dedicated website. Shoppers can choose to bring their own shopping bags, buy a plastic shopping bag for at least one dollar, or designated bags to contain goods at the statutory sale price."

In addition to chain retailers, the EPD is processing applications from hundreds of pharmacies for being authorised retailers, and will complete the approval process and update the list of authorised retailers as soon as possible.

To facilitate residential residents' organisations, owners'

corporations, property management companies or cleaning companies, as well as other industrial and commercial organisations to purchase designated bags and designated labels in bulk order, the EPD has been accepting bulk purchase applications from late 2023. As of mid-January, the department has received about 6 300 applications. Applicants mainly include property management companies (about 60 per cent) and residential residents' organisations or owners' corporations (about 10 per cent); cleaning companies, catering premises, hotels, social service organisations, schools, etc, each of which accounts for two to three per cent. The vetting of application is about to complete. The department will open online accounts for the relevant organisations progressively, so that they can make bulk order of designated bags and labels directly via EPD's online platform to meet their daily operational needs.

An EPD spokesman said, "Organisation interested in applying to open a bulk order account can download the application form from the MSW charging dedicated website ([www.mswcharging.gov.hk](http://www.mswcharging.gov.hk)). The EPD will process its application as soon as possible to get it prepared for the implementation of MSW charging. Moreover, as the number of bulk order accounts is expected to increase gradually, organisations with bulk order accounts are advised to place order of designated bags and labels as soon as possible."

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## Government's response on medical device regulation

In regard to media enquiries on the Consumer Council's recommendations on medical device regulation today (January 15), the Health Bureau (HHB) and the Department of Health (DH) gave the following response:

### Existing regulatory regime

While there is not yet specific legislation to regulate medical devices in Hong Kong, some products are already regulated by existing pieces of legislation, such as the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138), the Radiation Ordinance (Cap. 303), the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (Cap. 362), the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance (Cap. 456) and the Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation (Cap. 406G), depending on the characteristics and features of the products concerned.

Making reference to the recommendation of the Global Harmonization Task Force (GHTF, now known as the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF)) (Note), the DH has introduced a voluntary Medical Device Administrative Control System (MDACS) since 2004, under which a listing system for medical devices and traders as well as a post-market monitoring system are in place to ensure that medical devices supplied in Hong Kong can

meet the requirements on safety, quality and performance.

Among others, the DH has fully implemented a strategy of priority procurement of listed medical devices since June 2023, and set up a working group with the HHB and the Hospital Authority (HA) to promote the early implementation of similar procurement arrangements by public healthcare facilities under the HA in phases, which will encourage and incentivise traders of medical devices to apply for listing under the MDACS.

#### Follow-up actions

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Under an established mechanism, the DH has been closely monitoring safety alerts of medical devices issued by relevant regulatory authorities, including the local ones and those in other regions, as well as the World Health Organization, and taking appropriate actions according to actual circumstances. These include contacting local suppliers to follow up on necessary arrangements, notifying relevant stakeholders (e.g. the HA, private hospitals and professional healthcare institutions) through various means, and publishing safety alert summaries and special alerts on its website.

Since 2019, the DH has received a total of five complaints on medical devices listed under MDACS which all concerned quality issues of the products. Upon investigation, there was no evidence indicating that the products had quality issues.

The DH has noticed that three complaint cases were mentioned in the article published by the Consumer Council today regarding the purchase of medical devices. The department has proactively communicated with the Consumer Council on the cases concerned and taken appropriate follow-up actions. According to the information provided by the Consumer Council, one of the cases concerns the recalling arrangement of the respirator parts purchased through parallel import, while the other two are complaints related to the terms of sales and after-sales services of medical devices and do not carry any safety, quality and performance implications of the respective medical devices.

#### Future legislative works

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The Government has all along been planning for legislation on the regulation of medical devices. However, the progress was affected by the COVID-19 epidemic. As stated in the 2023 Policy Address, the Government will set up a preparatory office this year to study the potential restructuring and strengthening of the current regulatory and approval regimes for medicine, medical devices and medical technology. The office will put forward proposals and steps for the establishment of the Hong Kong Centre for Medical Products Regulation (CMPR) which will be a step towards the transition to the "primary evaluation" approach in approving applications for registration of new pharmaceutical products, and explore the upgrading of the CMPR as a standalone statutory body in the long run. This will help accelerate the launching of new drugs and medical devices to the market, and foster the

development of research and development and testing of medical products and related industries.

Looking ahead, the regulation of medical devices will fall within the scope of the CMPR's work. The Government will consider the legislative timetable for regulating medical devices in tandem with the progress of establishing the CMPR, thereby further enhancing the overall regulatory regime for medical products in Hong Kong.

To prepare for these related tasks, the HHB and the DH are now conducting a comprehensive review of the proposed legislative framework having regard to the latest international trends in regulation of medical devices in recent years, and will study various aspects of the regulation of high-risk medical devices, such that the legislative proposal may be introduced in due course.

The DH will continue to promote and enhance understanding of the public, users and the industry on the MDACS, with a view to having more medical devices listed under the system and making better preparations for the transition to a statutory regulatory regime in future.

Note: The GHTF was established in 1992 by regulatory authorities and trade representatives of the United States of America, Canada, Australia, Japan and the European Union to harmonise the standards and principles for the regulation of medical devices. It was disbanded in 2011, and the IMDRF was formed to build on the work of the GHTF. The IMDRF aims to accelerate international medical device regulatory harmonisation and convergence, and its current members include China, Australia, Brazil, Canada, the European Union, Japan, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.