

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected ketamine worth about \\$4.6 million at airport \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs on January 5 seized about 9.5 kilograms of suspected ketamine with an estimated market value of about \$4.6 million at Hong Kong International Airport.

Through risk assessment, Customs on that day inspected an air parcel, declared as carrying construction materials, at the airport. Upon inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected ketamine concealed inside three construction materials' packaging bags.

After follow-up investigations, Customs officers today (January 13) conducted a controlled delivery operation in Tuen Mun and arrested a 25-year-old man suspected to be connected with the case.

The arrested man has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. The case will be brought up at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts on Monday (January 15).

Customs reminds members of the public to stay alert and not to participate in drug trafficking activities for monetary return. They must not accept hiring or delegation from another party to carry controlled items into and out of Hong Kong. They are also reminded not to carry unknown items for other people, nor to release their personal data or home address to others for receiving parcels or goods.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).



[Speech by FS at CU Medicine 40th Anniversary Faculty Gala Dinner \(English only\) \(with photos/video\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the CU Medicine 40th Anniversary Faculty Gala Dinner this evening (January 13):

John (Council Chairman of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), Professor John Chai), Rocky (Vice-Chancellor and President of the CUHK, Professor Rocky Tuan), Francis (Dean of Faculty of Medicine, the CUHK, Professor Francis Chan), Philip (Dean-designate of Faculty of Medicine, the CUHK, Professor Philip Chiu), Arthur (Former Dean of Faculty of Medicine, the CUHK, Professor Arthur Li), faculty members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

“Good evening. I am very pleased to join you all in celebrating the 40th Anniversary of CU Medicine.

Although the pandemic forced a long delay of this Gala Dinner, I am delighted to see so many of you tonight.

The wait is over, and your presence here is a sure sign that our friends in the medical profession have plenty of – dare I say – patience!

Tonight we are here to reflect on CU Medicine's journey, and to envision its future as we embrace your 40th anniversary theme – "Succession, Innovation, and Dedication."

Over the past four decades and with the vision and commitment of the Founding Dean, Professor Gerald Choa, not only has CU Medicine supported patients and the community, it has also nurtured many of our leading medical

minds. From early humble days where medical students had to attend classes in makeshift containers, the school has now emerged as the world's top 40, and a hub for numerous ground-breaking studies that shifted the paradigm of clinical practice locally and around the world.

You are no doubt a key driving force that has contributed to Hong Kong's rise as a centre for medical excellence, nurturing generation after generation dedicated and compassionate healthcare professionals.

The inspiring spirit of CU Medicine

Beyond excellence in medical research, education and practice, I am most impressed by your proud and strong tradition, a tradition that emphasises compassion and empathy in caring for patients. This requires doctors and nurses to not only treat illnesses, but also take care of the emotional well-being of patients and their families – showing support and empathy for people enduring difficult and vulnerable moments.

I am delighted that this tradition has permeated your work and practice, evident from the profound appreciation by patients, the favourable feedback of the community, as well as national and international recognition of the school.

Investing in our medical future

Ladies and gentlemen, the success of CU Medicine, and the medical excellence in Hong Kong, reflect all the worthiness of investing in medical education. Rest assured that we will continue to support our medical schools in their development, in attracting more top-tier researchers, and equipping students with the resources and skills to excel in their chosen fields.

Building on the great foundation of Hong Kong's medical excellence, this Government is determined to develop our city into a premier health and medical innovation hub.

A key pillar to this vision is to establish Hong Kong as an internationally-recognised drug and medical device regulatory authority. We have launched the new "1+" mechanism in drug approval, and been making progress in the establishment of the Hong Kong Centre for Medical Products Regulation.

This will complement the many other efforts that we are taking forward to create a booming life and health technology industry in Hong Kong. On this, I wish to highlight the progress of attracting strategic enterprises in this field to come and settle in Hong Kong, be they industry giants or niche companies with frontier technology.

Our vision is this: beyond the know-how, investments, talent and job opportunities that they will bring to Hong Kong, these enterprises will gather their upstream, midstream, and downstream partners and associates here, forming a vibrant industry cluster in the city.

You may have noted that AstraZeneca, as well as several other life and health tech enterprises, are among the first batch of some 30 such enterprises that will establish research and development centres or production facilities in the city. Obviously, Hong Kong has our unique advantages: not only do we have the expertise and talent, strong basic research capability, but also our seamless integration of finance and technology. We are Asia's venture capital centre and No. 2 private equity funds hub, just behind the Mainland, and our listing platform is top class. Adding to that is our unique status as a gateway to the Greater Bay Area, Mainland and Asian markets. All the more so, the institutional strengths under the "one country, two systems" principle that protect intellectual property rights; and, more recently, the access to both international and Mainland data.

Looking ahead, there is vast room for collaboration between such enterprises and our medical schools in research, clinical trials and much more. For all these endeavours, we count on CU Medicine for your valuable contributions.

Concluding remarks

Ladies and gentlemen, there is much to be proud of, as we reflect on the many contributions and achievements of CU Medicine over the past 40+ years.

Allow me to take this chance to thank Francis for the invaluable contributions he has made as the Dean of the school for the past decade. I also wish his successor, Professor Philip Chiu, every success in leading the school to scale new heights.

With proud traditions, strong leadership and endless enthusiasm from its faculty members, students and alumni, I am sure that CU Medicine will continue to go from strength to strength as it enters a new era.

After all, a wise man by the name of Carl Jung once said, and I quote, "Life really does begin at 40 – up until then you are just doing research!"

Once again, may I congratulate and commend you on your many achievements and contributions so far, and wish you the best of education, research and clinical service in the future.

Thank you very much.



[CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza A infection](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 13) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection and reminded the community to heighten vigilance against influenza. The 2023/24 seasonal influenza vaccination programmes [have started](#) and the CHP appealed to members of the public to receive free seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) to better protect themselves in the coming influenza season.

The case involves a 3-year-old boy with good past health. He developed fever, cough and vomiting since January 9 in Pakistan. He went back to Hong Kong from Pakistan on the next day (January 10). He was brought to the Accident and Emergency Department of the Tin Shui Wai Hospital, and was admitted to the Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH) on the same day. His condition worsened on January 11 with shortness of breath and was transferred to the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit of the TMH. His respiratory specimen was positive for influenza A (H3) virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with severe pneumonia. He is now in serious condition.

Initial enquiries by the CHP revealed that the patient had not received SIV for this season and had stayed in Pakistan during the incubation period. It is an imported case. Two of his home contacts are currently symptomatic. The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons. SIV is one of the most effective means to prevent seasonal influenza and its complications, as well as reducing influenza-related hospitalisation and death. SIV is recommended for all persons aged 6 months or above except those with known contraindications. Persons at higher risk of getting influenza and its complications, including the elderly and children, should receive SIV early.

As it takes about two weeks to develop antibodies, members of the public are advised to receive SIV early for protection against seasonal influenza. Please see details of the vaccination schemes on the [CHP's website](#)."

A person who gets influenza and COVID-19 at the same time may be more seriously ill and would have a higher risk of death. It is important to receive both SIV and COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible, in particular for children and elderly persons residing in the community or residential care homes. The public should also maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against influenza and other respiratory illnesses and note the following:

- Surgical masks can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask;
- For high-risk persons (e.g. persons with underlying medical conditions or persons who are immunocompromised), wear a surgical mask when visiting public places. The public should also wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching one's eyes, mouth and nose;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub;
- Cover the mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending classes at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, perform physical activity regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

The public may visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [COVID-19 & Flu Express](#) for more information.

Red flag hoisted at Silverstrand Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (January 13) that due to big waves, the red flag has been hoisted at Silverstrand Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at the beach.

[FS to attend World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Switzerland](#)

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, will depart for Davos in Switzerland tomorrow night (January 14) to attend the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting taking place from January 15 to 19.

The WEF Annual Meeting 2024, themed "Rebuilding Trust", will engage in in-depth discussions around four areas: achieving security and co-operation for the world, creating growth and jobs, artificial intelligence as a driving force for the economy and society, and long-term strategies for combating climate change and achieving carbon neutrality. Leaders of governments, representatives of major international organisations and senior management of enterprises from over 100 countries and regions will attend the Meeting.

Mr Chan said, "Current geopolitical situation remains tense, with protectionism and decoupling sentiments rising high in individual countries. With an uneven pace of post-epidemic recovery and growth, global economic outlook still faces many uncertainties. At such a time, countries should join hands to promote a more resilient global development, respond to imminent challenges such as climate change, and make development more equitable and inclusive."

During the WEF Annual Meeting, Mr Chan will attend and speak at several keynote meetings, luncheons and dinners. Mr Chan will also meet with political, business and financial leaders.

"While attending the WEF Annual Meeting, I and other members of the Hong Kong team will actively tell the good Hong Kong and China stories, and explain the economic and social development of Hong Kong, striving to clear doubts over Hong Kong. We will in particular explain the successful implementation and long-standing advantages of the 'one country, two systems,' as well as Hong Kong's unique role in connecting the Mainland and the world. We will also introduce our new advantages and measures in promoting the development of industries, and encourage businesses to establish a foothold and invest here," Mr Chan said.

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, will participate in certain parts of the programme. Other members of the Hong Kong team attending the Annual Meeting include the Chairman of the Airport Authority Hong Kong, Mr Jack So; the Chairman of the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited, Mrs Laura Cha, and the Chief Executive Officer of MTR

Corporation Limited, Dr Jacob Kam.

Mr Chan will leave Davos on January 19 (Davos time) and arrive in Hong Kong on January 20. During his absence, the Deputy Financial Secretary, Mr Michael Wong, will act as the Financial Secretary. The Under Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Dr Bernard Chan, will be the Acting Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development during Mr Yau's absence.