

Transcript of remarks by STH

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, at a media session after attending the Legislative Council's Public Accounts Committee public hearings today (July 20):

Reporter: Mr Chan, there are some residents who asked for a later allocation into the estate, being that some of them are concerned maybe there's need for further testing before they actually move into the flats. Can the Government consider such a demand?

Secretary for Transport and Housing: We have to balance between the need for accommodation and the concern on water safety. So far we will continue to allocate flats for those who are in need of accommodation. By the time when they are given the allocation, they do have a choice to refuse it and wait for another allocation.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Update on number of dengue fever cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 20) reported the latest number of cases of dengue fever (DF), and again urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From July 13 to 19, the CHP recorded one confirmed DF case. The patient had been to the Philippines during the incubation period.

As of yesterday (July 19), 48 cases had been confirmed this year, all of which were imported cases. The cases were mainly imported from Thailand (21), the Philippines (10) and Cambodia (six).

DF remains endemic in some areas in Asia and overseas. In Guangdong, there were 64 cases in the first six months of this year. The latest figures for 2018 reveal that 32 216 cases have been recorded in Thailand, 1 512 in Singapore (since December 31, 2017) and 65 in Japan. Three local cases have been recorded to date in Taiwan in 2018. In the Americas, the latest figures indicate that 171 582 and 16 438 cases have been filed in Brazil and Mexico respectively in 2018.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

To reduce the risk of infections spread by mosquitoes, apart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from affected areas should apply insect repellent for 14 days (DF) or at least 21 days (Zika virus infection) upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor. DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public may refer to the CHP's [tips for using insect repellents](#) for details.

[Rugby World Cup Sevens 2018 kicks off](#)

with Nations Welcome Ceremony presented by HKETO, San Francisco (with photos)

Thousands of people attended the Nations Welcome Ceremony hosted by the Rugby World Cup Sevens 2018 today (July 19, San Francisco time) at the Embarcadero Plaza in San Francisco, the United States, to kick off the tournament weekend. The ceremony was presented by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, San Francisco.

This is the first Rugby World Cup Sevens to be held on American soil and it will be played at San Francisco's AT&T Park starting tomorrow (July 20, San Francisco time).

Today's ceremony welcomed the 24 men's teams and 16 women's teams from around the world. The competing teams from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, England, Fiji, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Russia, Samoa, Scotland, South Africa, Spain, Tonga, Uganda, Uruguay, the United States, Wales and Zimbabwe all went up on stage alongside a special mural art piece which will be displayed throughout the tournament.

Speaking at the ceremony were the Chairman of World Rugby, Mr Bill Beaumont; the Chairman of the Board, USA Rugby, Ms Barbara O'Brien; the Hong Kong Commissioner for Economic and Trade Affairs, USA, Mr Eddie Mak; and the President and CEO of San Francisco Travel, Mr Joe D'Alessandro.

Mr Mak, who assumed the post of Hong Kong Commissioner for Economic and Trade Affairs, USA in early July, said he was pleased to make his first official visit to San Francisco and greet the rugby players from around the globe.

"The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in San Francisco proudly presents today's programme to welcome the competing teams," said Mr Mak. "Rugby is entrenched in Hong Kong's sporting culture. The sevens really got under way in Hong Kong in 1976 with 12 teams playing to 3 000 people. In April, we hosted the three-day Hong Kong Sevens which featured 40 international teams playing to 120 000 enthusiastic fans.

"Global sports fans are enjoying a feverish summer. Just as the FIFA World Cup concludes we are gearing up for the Rugby World Cup Sevens. Sports fans would be right at home in Hong Kong as we enjoy a full sports calendar every year. Many international sporting events – from marathons and equestrian events to the E-Prix and regattas – take place in Hong Kong. We are fully committed to being the premier sports venue in Asia. We hope you will all come to Hong Kong to join us for some of our sports events."

Today's ceremony opened with a special performance by a cast member of

San Francisco's famous Beach Blanket Babylon musical revue, and concluded with a Cantonese opera act performed by an opera troupe from Hong Kong.

In addition to their stage performance, the Cantonese opera troupe also prepared four costumes for the public to try on in the costume tent. Many took the opportunity to take photos while wearing these colourful costumes.

Earlier in the week, the Cantonese opera troupe participated in community events leading up to the Rugby World Cup Sevens, including talks and demonstrations of this traditional art form for local youths.

"We are pleased to bring the Cantonese opera troupe from Hong Kong to participate in the welcome ceremony and cultural exchange activities. This is a great opportunity to showcase this traditional art form to San Francisco Bay Area audiences and youths," the Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, San Francisco, Mr Ivanhoe Chang, said. Cantonese opera was officially inscribed in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009. For those who want to learn more about this cherished art, Mr Chang encouraged them to visit the Xiqu Centre in Hong Kong, which is due to open in the brand new West Kowloon Cultural District later this year.





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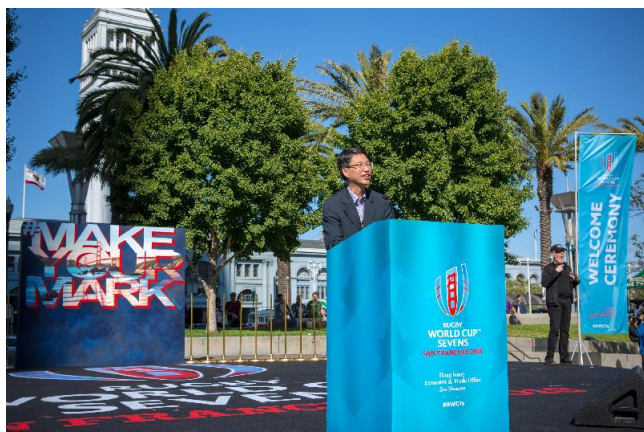
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Enhancements of SME Export Marketing Fund and Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales

The Trade and Industry Department (TID) will roll out enhancement measures on the SME Export Marketing Fund (EMF) and the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales (BUD Fund) on August 1.

The ASEAN Programme under the BUD Fund will be launched on that day to provide funding support to individual non-listed Hong Kong enterprises for enhancing their competitiveness and furthering business development in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) market. Enterprises can obtain a maximum funding of \$1 million on a matching basis for projects aiming to develop the ASEAN markets. In addition, the cumulative funding ceiling per enterprise for the current EMF and the Mainland Programme under the BUD Fund will be doubled. Details of the various enhancement measures are in the Appendix.

"The Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area development plan will bring about tremendous business opportunities for Hong

Kong enterprises. With the shifting of the global economic centre to Asia and developing economies, the Free Trade Agreement concluded in November 2017 will also help Hong Kong enterprises tap these fast-growing markets," a spokesperson for the TID said.

"The enhancements to be introduced will provide enterprises, in particular SMEs, with a wider funding scope, a higher grant ceiling and more streamlined application requirements and vetting mechanisms for exploring new markets and new business opportunities, and for responding to changes in the business environment and their operational needs," he said.

The guides and application forms of the above funding schemes applicable after enhancement have been uploaded to the websites of the EMF (www.smefund.tid.gov.hk/eindex.html) and the BUD Fund (www.bud.hkpc.org/en).

For enquiries, please contact the EMF Section (Tel: 2398 5127) and the BUD Fund Secretariat (Tel: 2788 6088).