

HKSAR Government today holds 2023 Constitution Day Seminar (with photos/video)

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government and the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR today (December 4) jointly held a seminar on Constitution Day, with the Endeavour Education Centre as the supporting organisation, with a view to enhancing public understanding of the constitutional basis and order of the country and Hong Kong.

More than 600 participants from various sectors of the community attended the Seminar themed "The Constitution and Chinese Modernisation" to actively explore in building a great China and advancing Chinese modernisation, how Hong Kong can contribute to the country and dovetail with the national strategies for better integration into the overall national development. The Seminar comprised of two parts: a keynote speech and a panel discussion. The keynote speech was delivered by Professor Zhang Xiang from the Peking University Law School. The panel discussion was moderated by the Chairman of the Management Committee of the Endeavour Education Centre, Mrs Rita Fan, who hosted a discussion with Member of the HKSAR Basic Law Committee of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) and Member of the Legislative Council, Professor Priscilla Leung; HKSAR Deputy to the NPC, Mr Nicholas Chan; and Professor Zhang, on the important role of the Constitution in promoting Chinese modernisation, Hong Kong's participation in the national rejuvenation and the country's modernisation .

Speaking at the Seminar, the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, said that the Chinese path to modernisation should be safeguarded by the Constitution. Similarly, the HKSAR's path of "one country, two systems", which is a pioneering path in history, must also be safeguarded by the Constitution and the Basic Law. The Central Authorities' overall jurisdiction is the source of the HKSAR's high degree of autonomy. The former and latter are in a relationship of "source" and "stream". Safeguarding and implementing the Central Authorities' overall jurisdiction is also fundamentally safeguarding the HKSAR's high degree of autonomy. Mr Lee stated that, in order to safeguard the jurisdiction, the firm implementation of the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong" is a must. He appealed to the public again to cast their votes so as to support the first major territory-wide election organised by the HKSAR Government after improving the district governance system and reforming the District Councils.

In his speech delivered at the Seminar, the Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR, Mr Zheng Yanxiong, mentioned that Hong Kong has been re-integrated into the national governance system since the day of its return, the Central Government exercises jurisdiction over Hong Kong in accordance with the Constitution and the Basic

Law, which has not only maintained the capitalist system, way of life and legal environment that Hong Kong people are accustomed to, but has also inspired them to participate in the Mainland's reform and opening up and modernisation, and to integrate into the overall development of the country, thereby creating prosperity and a bright future for Hong Kong. The implementation of "one country, two systems" in Hong Kong has always been one of the most unique and beautiful scenery in the country's modernisation process.

Professor Zhang pointed out in his keynote speech that the contemporary Constitution provides various methods and channels for national governance, and ascertains the main responsibility of the Constitution in many dimensions in national governance. With the utilisation of methods and measures of the Constitution and the fully implementation of the Constitution, the system of national governance can accomplish modernisation in full extent and the governance ability can enhance substantively. The fully implementation of the Constitution is the most fundamental and important act to enhance the governance ability and modernise the system of national governance.

The Government has arranged the government website as well as some major television stations to broadcast live the Seminar. The full version of the Seminar will also be uploaded to the website of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (www.cmab.gov.hk/en/home/index.htm) to enable members of the public to review the Seminar. They may visit the dedicated webpage (www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/constitution_day.htm) for other information about Constitution Day.



Update on cluster of Candida auris cases in Queen Elizabeth Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement on Candida auris carrier cases, the spokesperson for Queen Elizabeth Hospital gave the following update today (December 4):

Following a contact tracing investigation, one more male patient, aged 90, in the surgical ward was identified as a carrier of Candida auris while not having signs of infection. He is in stable condition and is now being treated in isolation.

The hospital will continue the contact tracing investigation of close contacts of the patient in accordance with the prevailing guidelines. A series of enhanced infection control measures have already been adopted to prevent the spread of Candida auris:

1. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of the ward concerned;
2. Enhanced admission screening for patients and environmental screening procedures; and
3. Application of stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene of staff and patients.

The hospital will continue to closely monitor the situation of the patient. The case has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

Government closely monitors situation of respiratory tract infection

A spokesman for the Department of Health (DH) today (December 4) said that, as it is expected to have more respiratory tract infections in winter including seasonal influenza as the temperature drops, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the DH will continue to closely monitor the situation in the local community through its regular surveillance mechanism. Members of the public, especially high-risk groups, should receive seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) and COVID-19 vaccines at appropriate times for enhanced personal protection.

The CHP has all along been closely monitoring the activity of respiratory pathogens locally through different channels such as laboratory testing, hospital admission, disease outbreak reports, etc. Surveillance data in the past four weeks (as of November 25) revealed that the rhinovirus/enterovirus has the highest activity level among the local respiratory tract pathogens, accounting for about 10 per cent of the respiratory specimens testing positive received by the CHP's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch and the Hospital Authority (HA), though maintaining at a steady level. The next active pathogens are parainfluenza viruses and adenovirus, with the latest positive percentage of 5.2 per cent and 4.4 per cent respectively and are on a rising trend, which are in line with corresponding seasonal trends before the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, according to the figures from the HA, the number of paediatric admission to public hospitals involving *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* infection in the past three months hovered 110 to 170 each month. The figures are higher than 50 plus cases in August, but the trend remains largely stable. Other than that, the local seasonal influenza and COVID-19 activities continue to maintain at a low level. There is also no recent increase in the number of outbreaks involving respiratory tract infections reported.

As many respiratory pathogens including influenza virus may have increasing activity and community transmission during winter, while vaccination is safe and effective in preventing seasonal influenza and COVID-19, the DH strongly urged members of the public, especially high-risk groups, to receive SIV as soon as possible, and high-risk groups (regardless of the number of doses received previously) should receive a booster dose to be given at least six months after the last dose or COVID-19 infection (whichever is later).

The spokesman said that mask wearing can effectively reduce the risk of viral infection and transmission. The CHP has all along suggested the following persons to wear masks:

1. any persons with fever or respiratory symptoms;
2. any persons who are visiting or working in high-risk places such as residential care homes (RCHs) for the elderly, RCHs for persons with disabilities, and clinical areas of healthcare facilities; and
3. high-risk persons (e.g. persons with underlying medical conditions or persons who are immunocompromised) who are going to crowded places such as public transport, etc.

Moreover, as both influenza and COVID-19 may cause more serious complications to the weak and frail or elderly people, the CHP has updated the [guidelines](#) targeting RCHs for the elderly and RCHs for persons with disabilities on November 27 to remind them again to maintain good personal and environmental hygiene at all times, while staff and visitors should continue to wear well-fitted surgical masks while working or visiting RCHs. The CHP also conducted briefing sessions with the Social Welfare Department to staff at RCHs, reiterating the importance of getting vaccination and wearing masks, with a view to enhancing the infection control and lowering the transmission risk of influenza and COVID-19 at RCHs.

"To prevent respiratory infections, members of the public should observe strict personal, hand and environmental hygiene at all times. Persons with respiratory symptoms, even if the symptoms are mild, should wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending classes at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly. They should perform hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask," the spokesman stressed.

For the latest information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and [COVID-19 & Flu Express](#). As for vaccination, the public may visit the CHP's [Vaccination Schemes page](#).

[AFCD charges Mainland fishermen suspected of illegal fishing in Hong Kong waters \(with photo\)](#)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (December 4) laid charges against three Mainland men on board a Mainland vessel suspected of engaging in illegal fishing in Hong Kong waters off Sheung Pak Nai.

Marine Police officers intercepted a Mainland vessel suspected to be carrying out illegal fishing activities in the above-mentioned waters at about noon yesterday (December 3) while on duty, and notified the AFCD.

After investigation, charges were laid today against the three men who were suspected to have violated the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171). They will appear at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (December 5).

According to the Ordinance, only a registered local fishing vessel can be used for fishing in Hong Kong waters. Regardless of the type of fishing gear used, a non-local fishing vessel is not allowed to carry out fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. Any offender, on conviction, is liable to a maximum penalty of a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for six months.

An AFCD spokesman said, "The Government is committed to combatting illegal fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. The AFCD will maintain close liaison with relevant law enforcement departments, continue to step up patrols and take stringent enforcement action."



[LegCo to consider Inland Revenue \(Amendment\) \(Disposal Gain by Holder of Qualifying Equity Interests\) Bill 2023](#)

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

The Legislative Council (LegCo) will hold a meeting on Wednesday (December 6) at 11am in the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. During the meeting, the Second Reading debate on the Inland Revenue (Amendment) (Disposal Gain by Holder of Qualifying Equity Interests) Bill 2023 will resume. If the Bill is supported by Members and receives its Second Reading, it will stand committed to the committee of the whole Council. After the committee of the whole Council has completed consideration of the Bill and its report is adopted by the Council, the Bill will be set down for the Third Reading.

Meanwhile, the Telecommunications (Amendment) Bill 2023, the Inland Revenue (Amendment) (Tax Deductions for Spectrum Utilization Fees) Bill 2023 and the Advance Decision on Life-sustaining Treatment Bill will be introduced into the Council for the First Reading and the Second Reading. The Second Reading debate on the Bills will be adjourned.

On Members' motions, Mr Paul Tse will move a motion on initiating the development of a strong maritime port strategy. The motion is set out in Appendix 1. Mr Yim Kong will move an amendment to Mr Tse's motion.

Mr Yim will move a motion on giving full play to the role of China-capital enterprises to promote Hong Kong's integration into the overall development of the country. The motion is set out in Appendix 2. Dr Tan Yueheng and Mr Chan Pui-leung will move separate amendments to Mr Yim's motion.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary for Administration will present "The Government Minute in response to the Annual Report of The Ombudsman 2023" and address the Council.

In addition, the Chairman of the Panel on Welfare Services, Mr Tang Ka-

piu; the Chairman of the Panel on Environmental Affairs, Ms Elizabeth Quat; the Chairman of the Panel on Financial Affairs, Mr Jeffrey Lam; the Chairman of the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services, Mr Martin Liao; the Chairman of the Panel on Home Affairs, Culture and Sports, Mr Vincent Cheng; the Chairman of the Panel on Health Services, Mr Tommy Cheung; the Chairman of the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene, Ms Chan Hoi-yan; the Chairman of the Panel on Public Service, Mr Kwok Wai-keung; and the Chairman of the Panel on Housing, Dr Lo Wai-kwok, will present the Reports of the related Panels and address the Council respectively.

Members will also ask the Government 22 questions on various policy areas, six of which require oral 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.