

## [Hong Kong Customs in joint operation with FEHD seizes about 3.4 tonnes of suspected smuggled hairy crabs at Man Kam To Control Point \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs and the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) mounted a joint operation at the Man Kam To Control Point on October 31 and seized about 3.4 tonnes of suspected smuggled hairy crabs with an estimated market value of about \$2.3 million.

Customs officers on that day intercepted an incoming goods vehicle at the control point. Upon inspection, the batch of suspected unmanifested hairy crabs was found mix-loaded with other properly declared goods on board the vehicle.

Furthermore, the seized hairy crabs did not come with health certificates issued by the relevant authorities of the exporting economies, and failed to comply with the requirements of the Shell Fish (Hairy Crab) Permit.

An investigation is ongoing. A 49-year-old male goods vehicle driver is assisting the investigation.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

Customs also reminds the trade not to import or put on sale hairy crabs with an unknown origin, and consumers should make purchases at reputable shops with the Shell Fish (Hairy Crab) Permit or relevant written permission granted by the FEHD.

According to the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance, 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. Moreover, under the Food Safety Ordinance, any person who, without reasonable excuse, does not register but carries on a food importation or distribution business commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

Customs and the CFS will keep up close co-operation and intelligence exchanges, while joint operations will be conducted to combat illegal food import activities.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email

account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eforms.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/](https://eforms.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/)).



## [Speech by CE at Hong Kong FinTech Week 2023 \(English only\) \(with photos/video\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at Hong Kong FinTech Week 2023 today (November 2):

Deputy Governor Zhang Qingsong (Deputy Governor of the People's Bank of China), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, and friends around the world,

Good morning. A warm autumn welcome to FinTech Week – and to Hong Kong.

This week and this year's Hong Kong FinTech Week, the eighth annual edition, features more than 500 speakers, 650 exhibitors and thousands of participants from over 90 economies, here in person and online everywhere. This is a flagship event of the Hong Kong SAR Government, and we aspire to bring together the brightest minds in the industry to a week of fintech activities.

The week-long events are themed "Fintech Redefined", and will help to shape the future of fintech in every dimension. I had the opportunity of visiting some of our impressive array of exhibitors at your booths just now, and I must say I am encouraged by your passion in fintech, and in Hong Kong.

You're here because Hong Kong is made for fintech companies, entrepreneurs and investors. We are one of the world's leading financial centres and China's major financial centre. No other economy can claim our unique advantage under the "one country, two systems" principle – which has empowered us to draw on, and create, opportunities from both our country and

the world at large.

Firmly premised on the "one country" principle, "two systems" is an important source of impetus that ensures our connectivity and drives our development. We are blessed with an open and highly internationalised market, advanced infrastructure and communications support in all regards. We have internationally aligned regulatory regimes. We have long been a free port and separate customs territory. We champion free trade and the free flow of information and capital.

Add to that the robust rule of law, and the fact that we are the only common law jurisdiction in China. You would know why Hong Kong is your fintech future. A truly redefined future.

Our strengths in financial services are wide-ranging and multifaceted. Hong Kong is Asia's asset and wealth management hub. Last year, we managed nearly US\$4 trillion in assets. About two-thirds of that came from investors beyond Hong Kong.

We are also the world's largest offshore Renminbi business hub. We have about RMB1 trillion in deposits, and handle about 75 per cent of the world's offshore Renminbi payment.

We are Asia's green and sustainable finance leader. Last year, the green and sustainable debts issued in Hong Kong exceeded US\$80 billion. Green and sustainable bonds arranged in Hong Kong accounted for more than one-third of the Asian market.

These, and other achievements, reflect the prowess of Hong Kong's financial sector and its potential – the opportunities here for us. And for you.

Over the past year, I have led high-profile business delegations to Southeast Asia and the Middle East. From Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, we shared our success stories and talked about Hong Kong's return to the global stage after COVID-19.

ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) is our second largest trading partner, for 13 years in a row. Our trade continues to grow, soaring almost 40 per cent since the signing, in 2017, of the free trade agreement (FTA) between ASEAN and Hong Kong.

Last year, 15 new offices with parent companies located in ASEAN opened in Hong Kong. Some 650 ASEAN local and regional offices and regional headquarters now call Hong Kong home.

The 10 member states of ASEAN are founding members of RCEP, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. In my meetings with ASEAN government leaders, they all reaffirmed their support of Hong Kong's accession to RCEP, the world's largest FTA.

My officials have also been covering the ground around the globe. While

keeping our close ties with our traditional partners in the European and American markets, we are also expanding our reach to markets under the Belt and Road Initiative, including those of Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

We have been telling them that Hong Kong is fully in business, creating boundless and new opportunities. From promoting co-operation in finance and commerce, to innovation and technology, we are committed to offering the far-reaching rewards to different economies and their businesses that are looking for high-quality development.

As you know, I presented my second Policy Address a week ago. I announced a number of policy initiatives to boost growth and enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness. Allow me, now, to highlight a few of those initiatives in financial services.

In securities, we will take forward a number of reform measures. We will reduce the stamp duty on stock transfer, and market data fees. We will also look into how best to follow up on suggestions of a dedicated task force to boost market competitiveness, from trading under severe weather, to facilitating share repurchase by issuers. Other medium- and long-term measures on listing regime, market structure and trading will also be considered.

The goal is clear: to promote the sustainable development of the Hong Kong stock market.

HKEX (Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited) will set up a new Integrated Fund Platform. It will focus on services related to fund subscription and redemption, settlement, the information portal and more. It will strengthen connectivity between Hong Kong's fund industry and the Mainland's financial markets in the long run, and boost Hong Kong's competitiveness as an international hub for funds. The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Christopher Hui, will share the details with you very shortly.

We will promote a better integration of fintech and green finance to fast-track our economy's green transformation. We will expand green fintech and, in doing so, establish Hong Kong as a green fintech hub.

Next year, we will launch a dedicated proof-of-concept subsidy scheme for green fintech. It will provide early-stage funding support for the pre-commercialisation of green fintech innovations. It will also promote the development of technology-powered solutions.

In June, HKEX launched the Hong Kong Dollar-Renminbi Dual Counter Model. It was created to advance the issuance and trading of Renminbi-denominated stocks in Hong Kong.

We will work closely with the Mainland authorities to include Renminbi counters under the Southbound Trading of Stock Connect and issue Mainland government bond futures in Hong Kong.

We will also liaise with the Mainland on the expansion of the mutual market access programme, including strengthening Bond Connect, as well as Stock Connect's product offerings and trading system.

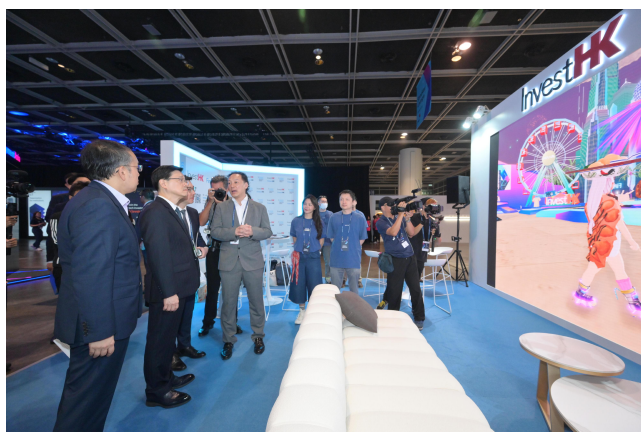
Ladies and gentlemen, the Hong Kong SAR Government is committed to the continuing rise of fintech, and its expanding reach and influence in Hong Kong and beyond. We offer unparalleled opportunities for fintech businesses – for your businesses – to grow and thrive long down this 21st century of opportunities.

My thanks to the organisers, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and Invest Hong Kong of the Hong Kong SAR Government, and our many other supporters for once again staging this key event.

Next on our financial events calendar will be the Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit next week. It is heartening to note that 300 leaders in the financial field, many of whom being group chairmen or CEOs of the world's top financial institutions, will be joining the high-powered Summit.

And, if you can find the time, there's a world of art, culture and entertainment, not to mention world-class hiking, biking and fine and fun dining here in Hong Kong. It's everywhere you look and turn in Hong Kong, Asia's world city.

Enjoy this FinTech Week and I wish you the best of business. Thank you.



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## **“Cheers!” Series 2023 to celebrate winter festive season with audiences**

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department's "Cheers!" Series 2023 will be held from December to February next year, presenting eight fabulous visiting and local family entertainment programmes that include acrobatics, puppetry, music and theatre, to bring friends and family a heart-warming and fun-filled winter season.

The opening programme will be the Asian premiere of "Passenger" by The 7 Fingers from Canada, which tells the captivating stories of encounters, reunions and goodbyes of travellers in train transit through spectacular acrobatic performances. ALFA Theatre Pilsen from the Czech Republic will make its Hong Kong debut with "Zorro", featuring traditional Czech marionettes with live band music and vocal accompaniment, and retell the legend of a superhero that combines elements of adventure, justice and comedy.

Local puppetry troupes will also present a series of exciting performances in this winter season. Puppet musical "Sweetyland III A Whistle of Dreams" by Make Friends With Puppet tells the story of mischievous twins pursuing their dreams, while "The Whale in the Ground" by Fantasy Puppet Theatre invites children and adults to explore the underground world with Moly, a mole with a passion for archaeology.

Acclaimed "The Snowman & The Bear" will return this winter with live orchestral accompaniment by the City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong, storytelling and singing, bringing audiences into a dreamlike, animated world through the big screen. The Hong Kong Oratorio Society will accompany music fans on Christmas Eve, performing a variety of classical Christmas vocal pieces and classic Christmas carols in the "A Christmas of Joy and Peace" concert.

"DO RE MI @ SuperBaby" by Jumbo Kids Theatre is a parent-child musical, in which musical genius Dr M creates a sonic paradise with little offbeat fairies through sounds and rhythms. At the family-oriented dance education theatre "Huh? It's the ant rangers again?!" by Rice Journey Production, the audience will explore how the ants handle different challenges in their journey by following their little footprints.

For programme dates, venues and ticket prices of "Cheers!" Series 2023, please see the Annex. Tickets are now available at URB TIX ([www.urbtix.hk](http://www.urbtix.hk)). For telephone bookings, please call 3166 1288. Package discounts will be available for ticket purchases with different stage shows in "Cheers!" Series 2023. For programme enquiries and discount schemes, please call 2268 7323 or visit [www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/f\\_entertainment/groups\\_1617.html](http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/f_entertainment/groups_1617.html).

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## Transitional arrangements for booking LCSD's fee charging leisure facilities in November

To tie in with the official launch of the new intelligent sports and recreation services booking and information system, SmartPLAY, at 7am on November 9, members of the public are reminded to take note of the special transitional arrangements of booking for fee-charging leisure facilities managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) within November (For balloting of soccer pitches, please see separate press release [www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202310/30/P2023102700656.htm](http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202310/30/P2023102700656.htm) ).

From now to tomorrow (November 3), members of the public can continue to make advance bookings of leisure facilities within seven days by November 9 through the Leisure Link on a first-come, first-served basis. As a transitional arrangement, available sessions of general fee-charging facilities from November 4 to 11 and November 5 to 14 will be made available for public booking in advance on November 4 and 5 respectively on a first-come, first-served basis (please refer to the Annex for details).

After the official launch of SmartPLAY on November 9, members of the public can make advance bookings of available sessions of leisure facilities within seven days (November 9 to 15) by the new system on a first-come, first-served basis, and so on. They can submit their applications via the SmartPLAY website ([www.smartplay.lcsd.gov.hk/home](http://www.smartplay.lcsd.gov.hk/home)) (from 7am) and mobile app (My SmartPLAY) (from 7am), Smart Self-service Stations (from 7.15am) or booking counters (from 7.15am) at major leisure venues.

Moreover, members of the public can make on-the-spot bookings of available facilities 15 minutes prior to that session at the booking counters of relevant leisure venues during the service suspension from November 6 to 8. For venues without booking counters, members of the public may go to the designated supporting venue to book the available facilities on the spot. For more details, please refer to the notice posted at the venue or contact the venue staff.

The LCSD reminds the public that starting from November 9, all people, including existing Leisure Link patrons, must register with the new system and complete an identity authentication process before using the new system to enrol in programmes and book leisure facilities. The LCSD has provided 375 new Smart Self-service Stations at around 240 leisure venues (including District Leisure Services Offices in various districts). Members of the public can submit their registration, and complete identity authentication and account activation procedures at these Smart Self-service Stations. A dedicated website and a mobile app are also provided for user registration.

If users complete their registration through the "iAM Smart" app, they can have their SmartPLAY accounts instantly activated. As the registration for SmartPLAY will be suspended from November 6 to 8, members of the public who wish to make advance bookings of leisure facilities on November 15 are advised to complete registration and authentication on or before November 5 (this Sunday) so that they can use the new system on November 9 immediately.

To encourage members of the public to register as users as soon as possible and exercise more, all users who have successfully registered as SmartPLAY users by November 5 and have completed authentication (including registered SmartPLAY users) are automatically entitled to enter a lucky draw with an opportunity to win a latest-model smartphone or other prizes. Details of the promotional activity can be found on the website:

[www.smartplay.lcsd.gov.hk/website/en/news/10015.html](http://www.smartplay.lcsd.gov.hk/website/en/news/10015.html).

For more information on SmartPLAY, please visit the SmartPLAY website ([www.smartplay.lcsd.gov.hk](http://www.smartplay.lcsd.gov.hk)), or call the SmartPLAY hotline at 3954 5150.

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## **Three property owners fined about \$230,000 in total for not complying with removal orders**

Three property owners who failed to comply with removal orders issued under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123) were convicted and fined about \$230,000 in total at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts last month.

In the first case concerning a domestic flat in a composite building on Tuen Mun Heung Sze Wui Road, Tuen Mun, an unauthorised structure with an area of about 28 square metres was erected on the flat roof, two metal frames were erected projecting from the external wall, and a fire-resisting door was removed and replaced with a door of inadequate fire resistance. As the unauthorised building works (UBWs) and alteration works were carried out without the prior approval and consent from the Buildings Department (BD), and affected the fire-resisting construction of the building, in contravention of the BO and the Building (Construction) Regulation, a removal order was served on the owner under section 24(1) of the BO.

Failing to comply with the removal order, the owner was prosecuted by the BD and was fined \$76,000 upon conviction by the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts on October 13.

The second case involved two flats co-owned by two owners in a residential building on Wu Chui Road, Tuen Mun, where five unauthorised structures with a total area of about 25 sq m were erected on the flat roofs of the two flats, and an opening was formed with a glazing door installed at



the external wall of each of the two flats. As the UBWs and alteration works were carried out without the prior approval and consent from the BD, two removal orders were served on the owners under section 24(1) of the BO.

Failing to comply with the removal orders, the two owners were prosecuted by the BD in 2016 and were fined \$44,000 in total upon conviction at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts. As the owners persisted in not complying with the removal orders, the BD instigated prosecution for the second time. The two owners were convicted again and fined \$153,920 in total upon conviction at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts on October 13.

A spokesman for the BD said today (November 2), "UBWs may lead to serious consequences. Owners must comply with the removal orders without delay. The BD will continue to take enforcement action against owners who have failed to comply with removal orders, including instigation of prosecution, so as to ensure building safety."

Failure to comply with a removal order without reasonable excuse is a serious offence under the BO. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$200,000 and one year's imprisonment, and a further fine of \$20,000 for each day that the offence continues.