

LCSD to hold Performing Arts Carnival 2023 at Tsuen Wan Town Hall and Yuen Long Theatre (with photos)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department is presenting the Performing Arts Carnival 2023 from October to December at five of its performance venues in the New Territories. The carnivals at Tsuen Wan Town Hall (TWTH) and Yuen Long Theatre (YLT) will take place in the afternoon on November 5 and 12 (both Sundays) respectively, with the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA), venue partners, local arts groups and district organisations showcasing an array of free performing arts programmes. Members of the public are welcome to join.

The fascinating programmes of the Performing Arts Carnival 2023 will cover dance, drama, music and Chinese opera. HKAPA students will offer different dance performances and an excerpt of the original musical "Home Sweet Home", as well as excerpts from operatic classics "Die Zauberflöte" and "Le Nozze di Figaro" by Mozart and "Carmen" by Bizet at the two performance venues. Also, the young talent will perform Cantonese operatic songs "Nocturnal Tears over an Epistle" and "The Reunion of Swords and Hairpins" from "The Purple Hairpin" as well as Chinese music works "Rain Lashing on the Plantain" and "Thunder in a Drought" at TWTH, and present Cantonese opera excerpts "Mu Guiying Gets a Husband" and "Lodging at the inn" from "The Sword of the Valiant" at YLT.

Various fringe activities will also be held at the carnivals. TWTH will stage a concert by Count-In Music, introducing jazz music to the audience, a children theatre by Ming Ri Institute for Arts Education, a Cantonese opera performance by One Table Two Chairs Charitable Foundation, and a Cantonese music theatre by artists Fung Kai-sze, Yeung Kin-ping and Wong Yee-lai in collaboration with TroVessional. At YLT, there will be Cantonese opera make-up and costumes demonstration workshops by the Hong Kong Performing Stage of Cantonese Opera, leaf whistling workshops by the Hong Kong Art of Leaf-whistling, handbell performances and interactive workshops by the Christian Alliance S Y Yeh Memorial Primary School as well as dance performances and interactive workshops by the Yuen Long Dance Troupe.

Admission to all programmes is free with limited places available on a first-come, first-served basis. Tickets for the fringe activities at TWTH and YLT will be available at the enquiry counter of the respective venues on the event day from noon while stocks last. For details, please visit the websites of TWTH (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/twth/performingartscarnival2023.html) and YLT (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/ylt/performingartscarnival2023.html).



FSTB launches GBA Fintech Two-way Internship Scheme for Post-secondary

Students

The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau today (October 27) launched the GBA Fintech Two-way Internship Scheme for Post-secondary Students to help students acquire practical work experience in fintech companies in Hong Kong and Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, said, "The Government has been attaching great importance to nurturing fintech talent. The Scheme will enable students to gain first-hand understanding of the operation of fintech companies and fintech ecosystems of Hong Kong and the Mainland, and equip them early with knowledge in pursuing a career in fintech, thereby enlarging the local fintech talent pool."

In his 2023-24 Budget, the Financial Secretary announced the introduction of a fintech internship scheme for post-secondary students. The Scheme will provide more than 150 internship positions in Hong Kong and Mainland cities of the GBA (Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai), covering fintech companies of different segments in Hong Kong and the Mainland, including virtual banks, virtual insurers, regtech, wealthtech, credittech and payment tech. More than 30 fintech companies will participate in the Scheme.

The Scheme is targeted at full-time students studying fintech-related subjects in post-secondary institutions in Hong Kong and Mainland cities of the GBA, including higher diploma and associate degree students, undergraduates, master's degree students or postgraduates. Internship positions in Hong Kong accept applications from Mainland students studying in Hong Kong, as well as Mainland students studying in Mainland cities of the GBA who hold valid permits to enter Hong Kong. Internship positions in Mainland cities of the GBA accept applications from Hong Kong students studying in Hong Kong and Mainland cities of the GBA. The Scheme will provide students with a two-month internship opportunity (with extension up to six months) and a monthly subsidy of HK\$12,000 (or RMB10,500).

The winter internship scheme is open for application from today until November 30. The first batch of students is expected to commence internships by the end of this year at the earliest. Details of the summer internship scheme will be announced in the first half of next year.

The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau has appointed Cyberport to administer the Scheme. For details of the application procedures and internship positions, please visit the dedicated website of Cyberport (gbafinternship.cyberport.hk/).

Pilot Scheme for Electric Public Light Buses accepts applications

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (October 27) announced that the Pilot Scheme for Electric Public Light Buses is open now for applications until November 17.

To promote the local application of electric public light buses (e-PLBs), the Government has earmarked \$80 million for the implementation of the Pilot Scheme to test the operation and performance of different models of e-PLB and the associated quick charging facilities, as well as conducting operational trials on various minibus service routes.

"The operational trials will be conducted in phases starting with Kowloon Tong (Suffolk Road) and Yue Man Square Public Transport Interchanges as trial points. It is expected that approval will be granted to all successful applications by December 2023 with a view to commencing the trial in the first quarter of 2024. Operators of relevant green minibuses interested in taking part in the Pilot Scheme should submit their applications to the EPD before the deadline," an EPD spokesperson said.

The spokesperson added that to encourage operators to participate in the Pilot Scheme, the Government will subsidise successful operators with 80 per cent of the vehicle price for each e-PLB joining the Pilot Scheme. Details about the Pilot Scheme and its application can be found on the EPD website (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/air/guide_ref/pseplb.html).

The Government launched the Hong Kong Roadmap on Popularisation of Electric Vehicles in March 2021, setting out the long-term policy objectives and plans to promote the adoption of electric vehicles and their associated supporting facilities in Hong Kong with a view to achieving the target of zero vehicular emissions before 2050. These include partnering with different sectors to actively test the applications of various electric and other new energy public transport, including e-PLBs, to accumulate experiences for establishing specific roadmap and timetable for the promotion of electric commercial vehicles.

Hong Kong Customs detects dangerous drugs internal concealment case

involving passenger at airport (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs on October 25 detected a dangerous drugs internal concealment case involving a passenger at Hong Kong International Airport and seized about 570 grams of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$600,000.

A female passenger, aged 53, arrived in Hong Kong from Bogota, Colombia via Paris, France, on that day. During customs clearance, Customs officers found her to be suspicious and suspected that she had dangerous drugs concealed inside her body cavity. She was then escorted to the hospital for examination.

Upon examination, the woman was confirmed by a doctor to have a foreign object concealed inside her body cavity. She was arrested immediately. The arrested woman has excreted a pellet of suspected cocaine weighing about 570g.

A holding charge with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug has been laid against the arrested woman. The case will be brought up at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (October 28).

Following the resumption of normal travel and exchanges with the Mainland and other parts of the world, the number of visitors to Hong Kong has also been increasing steadily. Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance to combat transnational drug trafficking activities.

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).



Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt, and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on October 26 to noon today (October 27), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 147 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" (www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 10 701 samples of food imported from Japan (including 7 068 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 3 158 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.