

## [HKMA signs MoUs with five local universities to foster collaboration on CBDC research \(with photo\)](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) today (October 20) established the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) Expert Group and signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with five local universities whose faculty members are participants of the group.

The CBDC Expert Group brings together experts from a range of disciplines, including business, computer science, economics, finance, and law, which are relevant to the HKMA's research work on CBDC. Through the establishment of the CBDC Expert Group, the HKMA seeks to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange on CBDC research with the academia. Under the MoUs, the group will support the HKMA's exploration of key policy and technical issues surrounding CBDC, and offer advices, training sessions, and workshops pertaining to CBDC and related fintech topics to the HKMA.

The five relevant local universities are: the Chinese University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and the University of Hong Kong. Membership of the CBDC Expert Group is on an individual basis (please refer to the [HKMA website](#) for the CBDC Expert Group member list). In addition to local universities, the HKMA will also consider inviting academics from overseas universities to join the group at a later stage.

The group has already commenced work on two research papers. The first paper is about privacy issues pertaining to CBDC. It will examine the efficacy of different types of privacy-enhancing technologies. The second paper will discuss the interoperability of CBDCs, and examine the viability of blockchain technologies and related standards in facilitating compatibility between different CBDC implementations.

The Deputy Chief Executive of the HKMA, Mr Howard Lee, said, "The HKMA has been actively fostering government-industry-academia collaboration in CBDC research. We are pleased to join forces with leading academic experts as part of our exploration of key policy and technical issues surrounding wholesale and retail CBDCs. The CBDC Expert Group will serve as a crucial component in reinforcing Hong Kong's forefront position in CBDC research."



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## [EPD signs follow-on contract for refuse transfer stations \(with photos\)](#)

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (October 20) signed the North Lantau Transfer Station and Outlying Islands Transfer Facilities Second Follow-On Contract with Canvest – Paul Y. Joint Venture.

"The joint venture has a multidisciplinary professional team required for the refuse transfer project and possesses rich experience in infrastructure construction. We expect that this co-operation could bring new technologies to the management and operation of the transfer station and transfer facilities, and provide a safe and reliable waste transfer service in Hong Kong," the Director of Environmental Protection, Dr Samuel Chui, said at the contract signing ceremony.

Canvest – Paul Y. Joint Venture consists of two companies, namely Canvest Environmental Protection Group Company Limited, which is a non-state owned waste management company and is also participating in cleaning and waste collection services in Hong Kong; while the other joint venture participant is Paul Y. Construction Company, Limited.

Upon completion of the refurbishment and upgrading works, the above transfer station and transfer facilities will have their waste handling efficiency comprehensively enhanced and environmental performance further improved, including an upgraded odour control system, better vehicle washing facilities, provision of vertical green walls improving the environment and so on. To join the global efforts in combating climate change, the EPD has stipulated in the tender documents that the contractor has to adopt waste container vessels with enhanced energy efficiency and full electric propulsion.

The New Engineering Contract (NEC) form has been adopted in the design, build and operate of the North Lantau Transfer Station and Outlying Islands Transfer Facilities Second Follow-On Contract. The NEC form embraces a

collaborative culture and, through contractual mechanisms, fosters the development of a mutual assistance and trust partnering relationship between the contracting parties. It also facilitates joint risk management, thereby enhancing project management performance and cost-effectiveness.



## Revisions of fees under Adoption Rules and Convention Adoption Rules

The Adoption (Amendment) Rules 2023 and the Convention Adoption (Amendment) Rules 2023 were published in the Gazette today (October 20) to revise the fees payable to the Director of Social Welfare (DSW) for acting as guardian ad litem (GAL) of an infant for the purposes of an adoption application.

The two Amendment Rules were made by the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal under section 12(1) of the Adoption Ordinance (Cap. 290). The two GAL fee items will be increased in phases from the current rate of \$3,970 to \$4,210, \$4,440 and \$4,670 with effect from 2024, 2025 and 2026 respectively.

A Government spokesman said, "The DSW, as GAL, has to investigate as fully as possible all circumstances relevant to the proposed adoption and make a report to the Court to ensure that the adoption is in the best

interests of the infant."

Government fees, on one hand, should be based on the "user pays" principle and set at levels adequate to recover the full cost of providing the services in general; on the other hand the Government encourages applicants to adopt children whose parents are deceased, or unable or unwilling to take care of them. Striking a balance, the Government seeks to recover 20 per cent of the full cost incurred in the execution of statutory duties under the Adoption Rules (Cap. 290A) and the Convention Adoption Rules (Cap. 290D). The results of the Social Welfare Department's review showed that the two fee items fall short of the target of 20 per cent of the full cost at 2023-24 price level.

The spokesman added that relevant fees have not been revised since 2017. The proposed fee revisions are mild and it is anticipated that these would not deter applicants from pursuing their adoption plans. Potential adoption applicants and the existing accredited bodies for adoption service have also been consulted on the proposed fee adjustments.

The two Amendment Rules will be tabled at the Legislative Council next Wednesday (October 25) for negative vetting. Subject to approval, the new fees will come into effect on January 1, 2024, January 1, 2025, and January 1, 2026, respectively.

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## **Proposed widening works of Yuen Long Highway (section between Lam Tei and Tong Yan San Tsuen) gazetted**

The Government gazetted today (October 20) the proposed road works to widen Yuen Long Highway (section between Lam Tei and Tong Yan San Tsuen) for increasing the capacity of the section of Yuen Long Highway between Lam Tei Quarry and Tong Yan San Tsuen Interchange, as well as enhancing the connectivity of Route 11 to Yuen Long South Development to meet the traffic need arising from the commissioning of Route 11 and the future developments in the Northwest New Territories.

Details of the proposal are set out in the Annex. The plans and scheme of the works are available for public inspection at the following government offices during office hours:

Central and Western Home Affairs Enquiry Centre,  
G/F, Harbour Building,  
38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

Tuen Mun Home Affairs Enquiry Centre,  
2/F, Tuen Mun, Government Offices,  
1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, New Territories

Yuen Long Home Affairs Enquiry Centre,  
G/F, Yuen Long, District Office Building,  
269 Castle Peak Road, Yuen Long, New Territories

District Lands Office, Tuen Mun,  
6/F, Tuen Mun Government Offices,  
1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, New Territories

District Lands Office, Yuen Long,  
9/F, Yuen Long Government Offices,  
2 Kiu Lok Square, Yuen Long, New Territories

The gazette notice, scheme, plans, resumption plans and location plan are available at [www.tlb.gov.hk/eng/publications/transport/gazette/gazette.html](http://www.tlb.gov.hk/eng/publications/transport/gazette/gazette.html).

Any person who wishes to object to the works or the use, or both, is required to address to the Secretary for Transport and Logistics an objection in writing, which can be submitted via one of the following means:

- By post or by hand to the Transport and Logistics Bureau's Drop-in Box No. 6 located at the 2/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong. The box is available for use between 8am and 7pm from Monday to Friday (except public holidays);
- By fax to 2868 4643; or
- By email to [gazettetlb@tlb.gov.hk](mailto:gazettetlb@tlb.gov.hk).

A notice of objection should describe the objector's interest and the manner in which he or she alleges that he or she will be affected by the works or the use. Objectors are requested to provide contact details to facilitate communication. A notice of objection should be delivered to the Secretary for Transport and Logistics not later than December 19, 2023.

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## **Appointments to Hong Kong Tourism Board announced**

The Government announced today (October 20) the appointment of Mr Richard Tsang Lap-ki as a new member, and the reappointments of Mr Abraham Chan, Dr Allen Fung Yuk-lun, Mr Ricky Szeto Wing-fu and Professor Simon Wong

Kit-lung as members, of the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) for a term of two years from November 1, 2023, to October 31, 2025.

A spokesman for the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau welcomed Mr Tsang in joining the Board, and expressed gratitude to the reappointed members for their continued valuable advice to the HKTB. He also thanked the outgoing member, Ms Alice Kwok Yim-ming, for her contribution to the work of the Board in the past six years.

Appointments to the HKTB are made by the Chief Secretary for Administration in exercise of the powers delegated to him by the Chief Executive and pursuant to section 9 of the Hong Kong Tourism Board Ordinance (Chapter 302).

The membership of the HKTB commencing November 1, 2023 will be as follows:

Dr Pang Yiu-kai (Chairman)  
Commissioner for Tourism (Deputy Chairman) with Deputy Commissioner for Tourism as alternate member  
Mr Abraham Chan  
Ms Sonia Cheng Chi-man  
Ms Vanessa Cheung Tih-lin  
Mr Dennis Chow Chi-in  
Mr Fong Lik-sun  
Ms Margaret Fong Shun-man  
Dr Allen Fung Yuk-lun  
Mrs Gianna Hsu Wong Mei-lun  
Ms Mary Huen Wai-yi  
Mrs Ann Kung Yeung Yun-chi  
Ms Rebecca Kwan Shuk-wah  
Ms Lavinia Lau Hoi-zee  
Mr Ricky Szeto Wing-fu  
Ms Joyce Tam Joy-yee  
Mr Richard Tsang Lap-ki  
Mr James Wong Cheuk-on  
Professor Simon Wong Kit-lung  
Mr Ronald Wu Keng-hou