

Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office to set up booth at Entrepreneur Day to encourage Hong Kong youths to grasp entrepreneurial opportunities in Greater Bay Area

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office (the Office) under the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau will set up a booth at the Entrepreneur Day exhibition at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre on December 5 and 6 to showcase the enormous opportunities brought about by the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and introduce the various support services available.

A spokesman for the Office said today (December 4) that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government attaches great importance to the development of young people and continues to launch various schemes and measures, such as the Funding Scheme for Youth Entrepreneurship in the GBA and the GBA Youth Employment Scheme, to support Hong Kong young people aspiring to set up their businesses and develop their career in the Mainland cities of the GBA, and to support them to realise their aspirations for innovation and entrepreneurship on a bigger stage in the GBA.

The booth set up by the Office at the Entrepreneur Day exhibition disseminates rich information, provides visitors, especially Hong Kong young people who aspire to develop their careers in the Mainland cities of the GBA, with practical information on the relevant policies, measures and support services. A Greater Bay Area Information Station (GBAIS) digital information platform will also be set up at the booth to provide visitors with easy access to information on policies and facilitation measures in various areas of the GBA, as well as practical information about living in the GBA cities. There will also be interactive games with limited-edition souvenirs distributed while stocks last.

The Entrepreneur Day exhibition of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) will be held at Halls 1D and 1E of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. The Office booth will be located at Hall 1E (Booth 1E – F02) and will be open from 9am to 6.30pm on December 5 and from 9am to 6pm on December 6. Admission is free. For those who wish to visit the Entrepreneur Day exhibition, online preregistration is required. Please visit the HKTDC's website (www.hktdc.com/event/eday/en) for more details.

For further information about the GBA, please visit the dedicated website (www.bayarea.gov.hk/en), which also covers the content of the GBAIS

(www.bayarea.gov.hk/gbais/en) for easy browsing by members of the public.

Government announces proposed toll plan for Tai Lam Tunnel

The Government announced today (December 4) that the Chief Executive in Council yesterday (December 3) had approved the Road Tunnels (Government) (Amendment) Bill 2024 to be introduced into the Legislative Council (LegCo). The objective of the Bill is to provide a legal basis for the management and operation of the Tai Lam Tunnel after its takeover by the Government on May 31, 2025, and to stipulate the new tunnel tolls.

A spokesperson for the Government said, "The Tai Lam Tunnel is one of the major transportation and logistics routes between the New Territories West/North and urban areas, and hence maintaining its smooth traffic is highly crucial. The Government will take the opportunity of taking over the Tai Lam Tunnel to implement the HKeToll, a free-flow tolling service, and set the new tunnel tolls, with the objectives of accommodating the public's expectations for a downward adjustment of tolls while meeting traffic management needs and supporting the operation of the transport trades."

The details of the proposed toll plan under the Bill are set out as follows:

- (1) The tolls for private cars will vary by time slots, ranging from \$45 during peak time slots, \$30 during normal time slot, to \$18 during off-peak time slots on weekdays (i.e. Mondays to Saturdays (excluding public holidays)), with a reduction rate of between 22 per cent and 69 per cent compared with the current tolls; for Sundays and public holidays, private cars will be charged \$18 throughout the day;
- (2) Taxis will be charged an all-day uniform toll of \$28, with a reduction rate of 52 per cent compared with the current toll;
- (3) Commercial vehicles such as goods vehicles and buses will be charged an all-day uniform toll of \$43 based on the "efficiency first" principle, with a reduction rate of between 33 per cent and 80 per cent compared with the current tolls;
- (4) The tolls for motorcycles (including motor tricycles) will be set at 40 per cent of the tolls for private cars during the corresponding time slots; and
- (5) Similar to the time-varying toll plans for the three road-harbour crossings, the Government will put in place a transition charging arrangement for bridging peak time slots, normal time slot and off-peak time slots in an orderly manner.

The spokesperson said, "We believe that an appropriate downward adjustment of the tolls for the Tai Lam Tunnel could divert part of the

traffic from Tuen Mun Road and Tolo Highway to the Tai Lam Tunnel, thereby improving the traffic conditions of the two highways and facilitating public commuting in the New Territories West/North. At the same time, this adjustment would attract commercial vehicles to use the Tai Lam Tunnel, which is conducive to the operation and development of the logistics industry. The Government will fully support the LegCo's scrutiny of the Bill and strive for its early passage."

The Transport and Logistics Bureau and the Transport Department consulted the LegCo Panel on Transport in July this year on the takeover arrangements and tolling scenarios for the Tai Lam Tunnel, and exchanged views with various stakeholders and organisations, including the Transport Advisory Committee and transport trade representatives. The above proposals have holistically taken into account the views collected by the Government and the policy objectives mentioned above.

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The Bill will be gazetted on Friday (December 6) for introduction into the LegCo for First Reading on December 11. For details of the Bill, please refer to the LegCo Brief issued today.

[LCQ20: Combating thefts on board aircraft](#)

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Kennedy Wong and a written reply by the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, in the Legislative Council today (December 4):

Question:

It has been reported that in the first eight months of this year, a total of 132 theft cases occurred on board aircraft to Hong Kong, representing a drastic 164 per cent increase over the same period of last year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the following information in respect of board aircraft theft cases that occurred in the first eight months of this year: the major flight routes involved, the value of the stolen properties, the number of persons arrested, the nationalities of the persons arrested, and the penalties imposed on the convicted persons;

(2) whether the authorities have looked into the reasons for the upsurge in the number of board aircraft theft cases, and what actions and measures have been taken to prevent the occurrence of such theft cases;

(3) whether the authorities will make good use of technology (e.g. facial

recognition technology), require Hong Kong-based airlines to install closed-circuit television (CCTV) in the cabins of their aircraft, as well as deploy security guards on board their flights, so as to combat thefts on board aircraft; and

(4) whether the Government will co-operate with airlines to enhance training for air crew members, as well as adopt more ways to widely educate and publicise among members of the public, so as to raise the awareness of air crew members and members of the public of the prevention of theft cases on board aircraft; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) have all along been paying close attention to and seriously combatting thefts on board aircraft. Apart from publicity and education, the Police have maintained close co-operation with the airport community to raise crime prevention awareness. Meanwhile, the Police have also strengthened intelligence gathering and adopted a multi-pronged strategy to curb and combat thefts on board aircraft.

The reply to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) Regarding the 169 theft cases that occurred on the Hong Kong-bound flights between January and October 2024, about 70 per cent were short-haul flights arriving from Southeast Asia, with the main places of departure including Malaysia, Thailand, India and Vietnam; about 20 per cent were flights from the Middle East, departing from Dubai, Turkey and Doha; seven per cent were flights from the Mainland China, Japan and South Korea; and the remaining three per cent were flights from the United States, Canada, Australia and Switzerland. The stolen property consisted mostly of cash in various currencies, expensive jewellery, watches and credit cards, with a total value of about HK\$4.32 million.

From January to October 2024, the Police arrested four persons of Chinese nationality on suspicion of theft on board aircraft. One of the arrested persons is on remand pending trial, while another has been released on bail pending further investigation. For the remaining two cases, since there was insufficient evidence or the witnesses were unwilling to return to Hong Kong to testify, the charges against the arrested persons were withdrawn after consultation with the Department of Justice.

(2) According to the Police records, the figures of thefts occurring on the flights to Hong Kong from 2018 to October 2024 are as follows:

Year	No. of cases
2018	103
2019	147

2020	10
2021	0
2022	3
2023	92
2024 from January to October	169

The table above shows that in both 2018 and 2019, over a hundred theft cases on board aircraft were recorded, while the number dropped to single digits during the pandemic. With the easing of the pandemic, Hong Kong resumed normal cross-boundary travel in early 2023. Air traffic has recovered steadily with a drastic increase in the number of flights and inbound travellers. The number of theft cases on board aircraft have also recorded a significant increase in 2024, which might be due to the fact that the Police have stepped up publicity to encourage more people to report crimes, or the overall economic situation.

To prevent and combat thefts on board aircraft, the Police have been maintaining close contact with airport stakeholders, including airlines, the Hong Kong Airport Authority and the Aviation Security Company Limited, to strengthen intelligence-led enforcement operations. For example, a database of suspects is set up to gather intelligence for crime analysis. Meanwhile, intelligence exchange with airlines is stepped up to identify at an early stage the relatively high-risk routes and periods where crimes are committed. Crime prevention seminars are also held on a regular basis, reminding airlines to pay attention to these routes, and to increase the alertness among air crew in a bid to prevent crimes.

(3) Currently, there are no international policies regulating the installation of CCTV or arrangements of security staff on duty inside cabins, nor are these common practices generally adopted by airlines. With issues such as personal privacy and human resources being taken into account, these arrangements may not conform to the principle of proportionality. As such, the Government have no plans to impose requirements in this regard for the time being.

(4) The Police have been maintaining close liaison with the airlines and extending the scope of education and publicity to the general public, so as to increase the awareness of air crew and the public on prevention of thefts on board aircraft.

Specifically, from January to October 2024, the Police organised 38 seminars on topics such as thefts on board aircraft and crime prevention, explaining the crime trends and common modus operandi to a total of 937 airport stakeholders from 38 airlines, so as to heighten the vigilance and crime prevention awareness among frontline airline staff and to prevent crime at an early stage. In general, crime prevention seminars organised regularly by the Police for various sectors in the community will also include messages that remind the public to properly secure their personal belongings when travelling.

Through the regularly organised crime prevention seminars, promotional video clips and pamphlets produced by the Police are broadcast and distributed to the airport stakeholders and various sectors in the community, travellers are reminded that they should safeguard their personal belongings and should never put cash or valuables inside the overhead compartments in the cabin, so as to avoid giving chances to thieves.

In addition, news about detection of theft cases on board aircrafts are disseminated to the media by the Public Relations Wing of the Police. Along with the purpose of enhancing the travellers' alertness, this also serves to remind the public not to defy the law, and that theft is a serious crime for which offenders are liable to imprisonment for up to 10 years.

To further combat thefts on board aircraft, in addition to placing promotional leaflets at suitable locations at the airport, the Police are discussing with the airlines the launch of a new round of publicity and education and appeal for their support to convey crime prevention messages to travellers by actively broadcasting the Police's promotional video clips in-flight and placing leaflets at check-in counters. For any theft cases identified, the Police call on travellers to report as soon as possible to enable the Police to carry out investigation at the earliest.

LCQ16: Results documents for Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination

Following is a question by the Hon Chu Kwok-keung and a written reply by the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, in the Legislative Council today (December 4):

Question:

It has been reported that some students were recently found to have allegedly submitted fake results documents for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) when applying for and during enrolment to a university in Macao. The relevant authorities in Macao have now stepped up verification for academic qualifications and examination results, while the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) has also filed a police report on the incident. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of enquiries received by the HKEAA from institutions outside Hong Kong for establishing the authenticity of the HKDSE results in

the past five years;

(2) of the number of cases involving suspected forgery of the HKDSE results documents uncovered by the HKEAA in the past five years;

(3) of the existing anti-forgery features in the HKDSE certification documents including result notice, statement of results and certification of results; whether the HKEAA has explored enhancements to anti-forgery measures for such documents; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) whether the Government will, by drawing reference from the practice of the Ministry of Education to establish the China Higher Education Student Information website, consider providing a unified platform that collates information on students' academic qualifications, student status and public examination files, and offers online verification services; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) is a widely recognised academic qualification in Hong Kong and abroad. It is also an important credential for further studies and employment of candidates. The Education Bureau (EDB) attaches great importance to the verification of the HKDSE results to maintain the confidence of people at home and abroad in the HKDSE qualifications. Falsification or provision of fake academic qualifications is a serious offence. If any person attempts to use false documentation of results, the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) will certainly refer the case to law enforcement agencies for follow-up action. The reply to the question raised by the Hon Chu Kwok-keung is set out below:

(1) and (2) In the past five years, the HKEAA has received one enquiry from a non-local tertiary institution about the authenticity of the HKDSE results held by its students. After verification, the HKEAA found that the HKDSE results of the students involved in this case were forged.

(3) Documents such as the HKDSE results notice, certificate, statement of results and certification of results issued by the HKEAA have multiple security features, including the use of watermarked fibre paper and microprinting technology for lettering. The HKEAA has also provided candidates, tertiary institutions and employers with result verification services (Note 1) to ensure that they can obtain or verify candidates' public examination results directly from official sources.

The HKEAA will annually review the various operational arrangements for the current HKDSE cohort for continuous improvements. It will also review and optimise the results verification services and security measures where necessary.

(4) It is understood that, as regards post-secondary institutions in Hong Kong, the Joint Universities Computer Centre, which is established by 19 post-secondary institutions and organisations (Note 2), has successfully developed and launched an inter-institutional academic certificate verification platform using blockchain technology. Post-secondary institutions and students may choose to use the platform at their own discretion. Participating institutions can digitalise and upload academic certificates of graduates to the platform, in order to allow students to share their credentials with relevant persons via the platform when seeking employment or further studies. The platform streamlines the verification of academic qualifications and helps combat forgery of credentials. As for the HKDSE, the HKEAA will closely monitor the situations and study the feasibility of developing an electronic results verification solution to enhance the efficiency of service. The EDB will closely monitor the application and development of the aforesaid qualification verification platforms and explore the feasibility of establishing a more comprehensive verification platform at a suitable juncture.

Notes:

1. The services include:

(a) HKDSE results extraction service: The HKEAA currently provides direct access to the results of the HKDSE for over 20 local and non-local universities, institutions and admission authorities, including the majority of the local tertiary institutions, Joint University Programmes Admissions System Office, the EDB, the respective joint admission offices of the Mainland and Taiwan, as well as a number of self-financing institutions in Hong Kong. After obtaining the consent of the student applicants concerned, the institutions may obtain the HKDSE results of the student applicants concerned directly from the HKEAA on the release date of the HKDSE or on a specified date, and the whole process is conducted without the intervention of a third party, so as to ensure the authenticity of the information; and

(b) Provision of Certification of Results: The HKEAA maintains records of candidates' results in public examinations since its establishment in 1977. Tertiary institutions or employers who need to check the public examination results of individual applicants may request the applicants to apply to the HKEAA for the issue of a "Certification of Results", which will be sent directly to the organisations specified by the applicants to certify the results of their public examinations.

2. Including the eight universities funded by the University Grants Committee; and the Hong Kong Metropolitan University, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, the Hang Seng University of Hong Kong, Saint Francis University, the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Vocational Training Council, Construction Industry Council, Hong Kong Chu Hai College, Tung Wah College, UOW College Hong Kong and University of Macau.

Government reminds Hong Kong residents to attend to personal safety when travelling to Korea

In view of the emergency martial law declared in Korea, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government today (December 4) reminds Hong Kong residents who are already there or intend to visit Korea to attend to personal safety. The Immigration Department (ImmD) has contacted the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (OCMFA), the Chinese Embassy in the Republic of Korea (Embassy), the Travel Industry Authority (TIA) and the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) to understand the situation. The ImmD has not received any request for assistance from Hong Kong residents so far.

A Government spokesman said, "Residents who intend to visit Korea or are already there should monitor the situation, exercise caution, attend to personal safety, avoid large gatherings of people and pay attention to local announcements on the latest situation."

The Security Bureau (SB), in view of the emergency martial law declared, has already updated the Outbound Travel Alert (OTA) webpage for Korea and will continue to closely monitor the situation there. Any update will be issued through the media, the SB mobile app and the OTA webpage (www.sb.gov.hk/eng/ota).

The ImmD will continue to maintain close contact with the OCMFA, the Embassy, the TIA and the TIC to monitor the development.

Hong Kong residents in Korea who need assistance may call the 24-hour hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit of the ImmD at (852) 1868, call the 1868 hotline using network data or use the 1868 Chatbot via the ImmD mobile application, send a message to 1868 WhatsApp assistance hotline or 1868 WeChat assistance hotline, submit the Online Assistance Request Form, contact the Chinese Embassy in the Republic of Korea at consular protection hotline: (82) 27550572, contact the Chinese Consulate-General in Busan at consular protection hotline: (82) 1085198748, contact the Chinese Consulate-General in Gwangju at consular protection hotline: (82) 623618880 or contact the Chinese Consulate-General in Jeju at consular protection hotline: (82) 647228802.

Hong Kong residents are encouraged to use the online Registration of Outbound Travel Information service (www.gov.hk/roti) of the ImmD to register their contact details and itinerary when outside Hong Kong. The information provided allows the ImmD to disseminate practical information to them through appropriate means, including SMS on mobile phones, on a timely basis when necessary.