

Pilot Scheme on the Use of School Venues by Arts Groups opens for application

The Pilot Scheme on the Use of School Venues by Arts Groups is open for arts groups' application today (May 2). Arts groups may hire the school venues for rehearsals during after-school hours.

Booking applications are accepted from May 2 to 31 and mid-September to October in 2024. Each round of booking will be closed at 5.30pm on the last working day of the month of May or October. Arts groups are required to submit confirmed venue booking details as a proof that the rehearsal is related to a public performance within the next 12 months. Details including the list of participating schools, information on facilities opened and rate of hire charges, etc are available at the Scheme website (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/programmes/programmeslist/schoolvenuesbyartsgroups.html).

The Scheme was announced in the 2023 Policy Address. It aims to open parts of school venues for rehearsals by arts groups during after-school hours on a pilot basis to provide more venues for arts groups. At the same time, it fosters the development of the arts and cultural industries as well as promotes arts education through the provision of more opportunities for students to access artistic creations. The Scheme is jointly taken forward by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, and the Education Bureau.

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 April 30 to noon today (May 2), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 426 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category, in the past two days. 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 100 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 47 640 samples of food imported from Japan (including 31 075 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 12 484 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Import of poultry meat and products from Chiba Prefecture in Japan suspended

â€‹The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (May 2) that in view of a notification from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan about an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5 avian influenza in Chiba Prefecture in Japan, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the area with immediate effect to

protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 440 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 68.05 million poultry eggs from Japan in the first three months of this year.

â€œThe CFS has contacted the Japanese authority over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the World Organisation for Animal Health and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreak. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

LCSD "Dance for All" Community Care Inclusive Dance Scheme kick-off ceremony and inclusive performance to be held this Sunday (with photos)

The "Dance for All" Community Care Inclusive Dance Scheme, organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), will be launched with a kick-off ceremony this Sunday (May 5) at 1pm at the Foyer of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. The ceremony will be closely followed by the "Dance with Me" Inclusive Dance Performance by several inclusive dance groups. Members of the public are welcome to join the event.

During the ceremony, seasoned dance artist Andy Wong and professional dancers will perform together with young people with different abilities from Hong Kong Red Cross John F. Kennedy Centre – Wheelchair Dance Group, Hong Chi Morninglight School, Tuen Mun – Dance Group, St. James' Settlement – Dancing Heart Troupe (Dancing Heart 2), and Ebenezer New Hope School – Dance Group. Audience members will be invited to learn a dance pattern and dance together during an interactive session. Members of the public can familiarise themselves with the dance pattern first from this demonstration video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfxCjEMgt_A) before joining in the fun to experience first-hand the joy of inclusive dance.

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The 15-month "Dance for All" Community Care Inclusive Dance Scheme is a new offering from the LCSD with Wong as Artistic Advisor. Based in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, the scheme consists of a series of dance performances with disabled persons as performers, workshops, exhibitions, in-school training classes tailored for special schools, finale performance and more. Wong is the founder of several inclusive dance groups, as well as a recipient of the Chief Executive's Commendation for Community Service from

the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, and many other awards. Apart from giving dance training to people with different abilities, he has extensive experience in stage performance, choreography and other forms of arts training. For more details of the scheme, please call 2591 1300 or visit www.abo.gov.hk/en/scheme/idc2425.

To show care for senior citizens, people with different abilities and other communities in need, the LCSD has introduced the Community Care Series which offers a vast range of recreational, sports and cultural activities and facilities. More details can be found on its webpage at www.lcsd.gov.hk/edutainment/en/for_care/index.



[Speech by SITI at Lingnan University School of Data Science Establishment Ceremony \(English only\) \(with photo\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the Lingnan University School of Data Science Establishment Ceremony today (May 2):

Mr Andrew Yao (Chairman of the Council of the Lingnan University), Mr Tim Lui (Chairman of the University Grants Committee), Professor Joe Qin (President of the Lingnan University and Wai Kee Kau Chair Professor of Data Science), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It is my great pleasure to join you all today at the Establishment Ceremony of the School of Data Science in Lingnan University.

For long, Lingnan has taken pride in its long history as well as its legacy and mission of providing whole-person education that blends Eastern and Western philosophies. Liberal arts education, or in Chinese, 通識教育, forms the cornerstone of the Lingnan community.

Today marks the beginning of a new chapter of Lingnan. With the objective to seamlessly integrate arts, humanities and sciences, the new School of Data Science is the best illustration of what higher education looks like today and tomorrow.

In the digital era where data-related knowledge has become indispensable and the demand for talents equipped with such knowledge rises at exponential rate, I am pleased to learn that Lingnan University has offered various programmes on Data Science and AI (artificial intelligence), and will be introducing more in the coming years. These programmes would be the strong propellers to the Government's efforts in enlarging the local talent pool in the innovation and technology (I&T) sector to create new impetus for economic growth.

Having been in the field of higher education for nearly 30 years in Hong Kong, I am well aware of the pressure university administrators face in admitting new programmes and the concerns students may have about their career prospects after graduation. As President Xi Jinping has indicated, new quality productive forces would be the driving force for our future, and I&T is the transformative agent in the process. Please rest assured that I&T is Hong Kong's future and we are on the right track.

The Government is making significant strides to foster the development of Hong Kong's I&T and data-based digital economy. Apart from our steadfast commitment to opening up more data and promoting cross-boundary data flow in the Greater Bay Area, Cyberport is setting up the AI Supercomputing Centre for commissioning in phases from this year onwards to accelerate high-powered computing projects and facilitate scientific breakthrough. The \$3 billion AI funding scheme as announced in the Budget this year will also help eligible users, including universities, to make the best use of the AI supercomputing infrastructure.

To unleash the potentials of data and optimise these I&T resources, we need more talents in the field of data science to ignite the power of data and AI, transform research outcomes into applications and business opportunities, and chart new horizon of our digital society. Members of the School of Data Science would surely be a good fit for these.

Before I close, please allow me to express my appreciation to Mr Yao, Professor Qin and all Lingnan members for contributing to today's success and steering Lingnan University into a new era. I am confident that Lingnan University will continue to stand tall as a beacon of excellence in liberal arts education. And, with the establishment of the School of Data Science, there is no doubt that Lingnan University will lead the next wave of digital revolution in Hong Kong's higher education sector.

As Lingnan University's 60th anniversary approaches, I wish Lingnan many fruitful returns. And, again, congratulations on today's Establishment Ceremony of the School of Data Science. Thank you.

