

Speech by SITI at 2nd Global Innovation & Technology Summit (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the 2nd Global Innovation & Technology Summit today (April 3):

Ms Lu Xinning (Deputy Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Ms Lu Xinning), Mr Fang Jianming (Deputy Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR Mr Fang Jianming), Mr Nurbek (Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr Sayasat Nurbek), Professor Nancy Ip (Council Chair of the Greater Bay Area Association of Academicians (GBAAA) and President of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Professor Nancy Ip), Professor Teng (Council Vice-Chair of the GBAAA and President of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Mr Teng Jin-guang), distinguished speakers and guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It is my honour to join you all today at the 2nd Global Innovation & Technology (I&T) Summit. First of all, I would like to extend my appreciation to the Greater Bay Area Association of Academicians for organising this Summit again. This event will provide exciting opportunities for government officials, university presidents, and academic staff from local and overseas universities to engage in inspiring dialogues, explore collaboration opportunities, and share valuable insights towards achieving multilateral education goals and advancing educational and research innovation.

It was emphasised in the work report of the 20th National Congress that science and technology should continue to constitute the primary productive force of our country, with talent as the primary resource and innovation as the primary driving force. Our country should implement strategies to promote national prosperity through science and technology education, nurture a rich talent pool and drive high-quality development through innovation. Being home to five world's top 100 universities, and numerous world-class experts and scholars, Hong Kong has access to the best resources available, forming a solid foundation and network for our journey to become an international I&T hub. To realise this goal, fostering collaborative efforts among the government, academic, and research sectors is of utmost importance for all of us. I am delighted to witness how today's event will bring us together, facilitating the exchange of ideas and collective efforts towards achieving our shared objective.

Young people are Hong Kong's future. The National 14th Five-Year Plan clearly supports Hong Kong's development into an international I&T centre, and it is crucial to acknowledge that active participation of universities in

grooming R&D (research and development) talent and their contribution to the talent pool and I&T ecosystem hold significant importance in achieving this plan. The Government has been very proactive recently in its efforts to nurture I&T talent and enlarge the local talent pool, and now I would like to share some notable examples that highlight these initiatives.

The first example is the STEM Internship Scheme. This scheme aims to encourage university students to participate in I&T-related work during their studies, so that many of these students can pursue a career in I&T field after their graduation, and therefore enlarge the local talent pool. Another example is the Research Talent Hub that was launched a few years ago with an aim to nurture and bring together more technology talent through a very effective subsidy programme and eventually encourage these students to pursue a career in the I&T field and eventually enlarge the I&T talent in Hong Kong. To further accelerate the expansion of the talent pool, the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) was also introduced to provide a fast-track arrangement for those eligible companies to admit Mainland China and overseas technology talent, in particular young talent, to come to Hong Kong to undertake R&D work.

The Government indeed has also been providing stable resources for universities to conduct R&D activities as well as supporting the commercialisation of its outcomes. For example, in this year's Budget announcement, we have doubled the maximum funding support to the Technology Transfer Office of each of the eight UGC (University Grants Committee)-funded universities to \$16 million per year, in order to strengthen technology transfer and marketing services. Another example is that we will provide each designated university with an annual subsidy of \$16 million under the Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities (TSSSU) to support the start-up development, therefore to provide more job opportunities for our young talent. Another well-known example is the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) which was launched in October last year. This programme aims to promote the "1 to N" transformation, therefore to encourage the commercialisation and technology transfer of universities' R&D outcomes. I am pleased to tell you that the evaluation of the first batch of the proposals has been completed last week, and we have recommended about 20 proposals for the next process.

Ladies and gentlemen, higher education institutions are the cradle of I&T, as well as the key force for scientific research. The Government will continue its unfailing support to promote higher education, placing utmost importance on effective communication with stakeholders, and fostering the growth of exceptional I&T talent, all for the betterment of society as a whole.

I hope that today's discussions and exchanges serve as valuable takeaways for all of us. Together, we have the power to shape a future where collaborative efforts drive advancements in the I&T sector. Finally, may I wish all of you rewarding and fruitful exchanges in the following time. Thank you very much.

Policy on change of sex entry on Hong Kong identity card revised

In view of the judgment handed down by the Court of Final Appeal (CFA) on February 6, 2023, in Q & Tse Henry Edward v Commissioner of Registration (FACV No. 8 & 9 of 2022) (Q & Tse case), the Government announced today (April 3) that the policy on change of sex entry on Hong Kong identity card (the Policy) has been revised. From now on, in addition to persons who have completed full sex reassignment surgery (SRS), generally, if persons who have not completed full SRS have completed the specified surgical treatment for the purpose of modifying sexual characteristics and satisfied the revised criteria and requirements, they may apply for a change of sex entry on their Hong Kong identity cards.

A spokesperson for the Government said that the Government decided to revise the Policy upon the completion of a review of the Policy conducted in view of the judgment in the Q & Tse case, having prudently considered the objective of the Policy, relevant legal and medical advice, as well as drawing reference from the relevant practices overseas.

Under the newly revised Policy, in general, if a person who has not completed full SRS is able to show, together with relevant medical proof and supporting documents, that he or she has completed the following surgical treatment and satisfies all of the following criteria and requirements, the Commissioner of Registration (i.e. the Director of Immigration) (Commissioner) will consider the application for a change of sex entry on the Hong Kong identity card having regard to the particular circumstances of the case:

(a) The applicant has completed surgical treatment for the purpose of modifying sexual characteristics:

- (i) for sex change from female to male: removal of the breasts (bilateral mastectomy);
 - (ii) for sex change from male to female: removal of the penis and testes;
- and

(b) The applicant satisfies the Commissioner that all of the following conditions are met and makes a statutory declaration to confirm he or she:

- (i) has or had gender dysphoria;
- (ii) has lived in the opposite sex, throughout the period of at least two years ending with the date on which the application is made;
- (iii) will continue to live in the opposite sex for the rest of his or her life;
- (iv) has been undergoing hormonal treatment of the opposite sex throughout the period of at least two years continuously before the date on which the application is made; and

(v) will continue to undergo continuous hormonal treatment of the opposite sex and submit blood test report(s) as requested by the Commissioner for random checking of his or her hormonal profile.

The Immigration Department will process applications that have been received but have yet to be processed in accordance with the revised Policy, and will take the initiative to contact the relevant individual applicants for follow-up.

The spokesperson stressed that the revision concerns the policy on change of sex entry of Hong Kong identity card only, and that the sex entry on a Hong Kong identity card does not represent the holder's sex as a matter of law. It does not affect any other policies of the Government or the handling of any other gender-related matters under the law in Hong Kong or relevant legal procedures.

Red flags hoisted at Hung Shing Yeh Beach and Pui O Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (April 3) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Hung Shing Yeh Beach and Pui O Beach in Islands District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Missing man in Tin Shui Wai located

A man who went missing in Tin Shui Wai has been located.

Tsang Man-tat, aged 36, went missing after he was last seen in Tin Wah Estate on March 29 morning. The staff of his caring centre made a report to Police on the same day.

The man was located on Pei Ho Street, Sham Shui Po, this morning (April 3). He sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

[New commemorative facility for green burial installed in Tsang Tsui Garden of Remembrance, Tuen Mun \(with photos\)](#)

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (April 3) that to further enhance its green burial services, a wooden artwork has been installed at the Garden of Remembrance (GoR) in Tsang Tsui, Tuen Mun, to enable families of those who have chosen green burial to pay tribute to the deceased.

The GoR at the Tsang Tsui Columbarium in Tuen Mun is built along the waterfront and designed to blend in with the natural environment. The new memorial facility is a participatory artwork created by local wood artist Parry Ling on the themes of environmental protection and remembrance. It is created in the shape of a wooden boat by using debris from fallen trees and other garden waste collected from Y·PARK. The boat is a metaphor not only to commemorate those who have passed away and used green burial, but also to provide a space of transition for their loved ones after their departure. Memorial post boxes with local characteristics on the artwork allow families of those who have used green burial services (including scattering of cremains at sea and in GoRs) to send their blessings and remembrance to the deceased by posting memorial notes.

The Government is committed to promoting green burial as a more environmentally friendly and sustainable way of handling cremated human ashes. The Government will continue to provide and improve its facilities so that green burial gradually becomes a mainstream arrangement for handling cremated human ashes, thereby achieving the policy objectives of being more environmentally friendly and promoting sustainable development. In addition to installing the new commemorative facility, the FEHD will provide the following new services:

- Tsang Tsui GoR to be the first GoR to provide, on a trial basis, an individual room for family members to hold simple memorial ceremonies before scattering cremains in the GoR;
- Provide families with the option of using traditional metal ash scattering device or one-off paper scattering device provided free of charge by the FEHD for the scattering of cremains in GoR. They can write down their blessings and words of remembrance for the deceased on the paper ash scatterers. Members of the public may also bring other ash scatterers or containers to scatter cremains;
- Watering pots will be provided in designated GoRs for families to water the grass after scattering cremains, so that the cremains of the deceased can be mixed into the soil and turned into spring soil to

nurture flowers and plants;

- Providing those who choose to use the service to scatter cremains at sea with a memorial card with the name of the deceased, date and place of scattering of ashes, together with a photo frame as a keepsake; and
- Enhancing the free ferry service for scattering cremains at sea to allow applicants to change the date of scattering cremains online.

The popularity of green burial has grown significantly over the past decade and is becoming increasingly acceptable to the public, with the number of cases adopting green burial increasing nearly threefold since 2013. The Government encourages members of the public to make early end-of-life preplanning, and most importantly to make their wishes for green burial known to their family members. The FEHD has set up the Green Burial Central Register (www.greenburial.gov.hk/gbcr/eng/home/index.html) for public access to register one's wish for a green burial.

