

# SCST attends meeting on preparatory work for National Games, National Games for Persons with Disabilities and National Special Olympic Games in Guangzhou (with photos)

The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, today (March 20) cochaired with the Head of the Sports Bureau of Guangdong Province, Mr Cui Jian, a meeting in Guangzhou on the preparatory work for the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games. The Head of the National Games Coordination Office (NGCO), Mr Yeung Tak-keung, and the Deputy Head of the NGCO, Mr Paul Cheng, also attended the meeting.

Mr Kevin Yeung said, "The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is grateful for the Central Government's trust and support in letting us cohost the three Games with Guangdong and Macao in 2025. I cochaired a meeting on the preparatory work for the Games with the Head of the Sports Bureau of Guangdong Province, Mr Cui Jian, in Guangzhou today, to closely liaise with the Guangdong Provincial Government and review work progress, with a view to making the Games a success and uniting all sectors of the community by deepening collaboration between Hong Kong and other cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area."

Mr Yeung and his delegation visited the Guangdong Olympic Sports Center to know more about the operation and management of the Center and subsidiary facilities, as well as the improvement works.

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau set up the National Games Coordination Office last year to fully take on the planning and implementation work of the Games, to be cohosted by Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao in 2025.

The National Games, held once every four years, are the nation's highest-level and the largest national multisport event. The State Council announced in August 2021 that the 15th National Games will be cohosted by Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao in 2025. This is the first time for Hong Kong to be a cohost of the National Games. The three sides will also cohost the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games, subsequent to the 15th National Games.



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## Smart Traffic Fund approves two projects

The Transport Department (TD) today (March 20) announced that the 13th batch of two projects has been approved by the Management Committee on Smart Traffic Fund, involving a total grant of around \$20.4 million.

The two approved projects in the latest batch cover testing system for autonomous vehicles, and route planning and traffic prediction system for tourist coaches. Details of the projects are available on the Fund's website ([www.stf.hkpc.org](http://www.stf.hkpc.org)).

The Fund accepts applications year-round to provide funding support to local organisations and enterprises for conducting research and application of innovation and technology with the objectives of enhancing commuting convenience, enhancing efficiency of the road network or road space, and improving driving safety. All applications are considered and assessed in batches by the Management Committee, which is chaired by the Deputy Commissioner for Transport (Planning and Technical Services) and comprises

representatives from the Government, experts in the industry and relevant stakeholders.

The TD appeals to interested organisations and enterprises for participation to help make the Fund a success, and to build Hong Kong into a more liveable and sustainable city by driving Hong Kong toward a new era of transportation.

Application details are available on the Fund's website. For enquiries, please contact the Hong Kong Productivity Council, the Secretariat of the Fund, on 2788 5536 or [stf\\_sec@hkpc.org](mailto:stf_sec@hkpc.org).

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## [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 March 19 to noon today (March 20), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 177 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](http://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](http://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](http://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 37 420 samples of food imported from Japan (including 25 022 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 10 328 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

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## [Auction of personalised vehicle registration marks to be held on April 7](#)

The Transport Department (TD) today (March 20) announced that an auction of personalised vehicle registration marks (PVRMs) will be held on April 7 (Sunday) in Meeting Room S421, L4, Old Wing, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 240 approved PVRMs will be put up for public auction. A list of the marks has been uploaded to the department's website, [www.td.gov.hk/en/public\\_services/vehicle\\_registration\\_mark/index.html](http://www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services/vehicle_registration_mark/index.html)," a department spokesman said.

The reserve price of each of these marks is \$5,000. Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$5,000 should also participate in the bidding (including the first bid at the reserve price). Otherwise, the PVRM concerned may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following points:

- (1) Bidders are required to produce the following documents for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after successful bidding:
  - (i) the identity document of the successful bidder;
  - (ii) the identity document of the purchaser (if the purchaser and the successful bidder are different persons);
  - (iii) a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation (if the purchaser is a body



corporate); and

(iv) a crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed. Successful bidders may also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS), but are reminded to note the maximum transfer amount in the same day of the payment card. Payment by post-dated cheque, cash, credit card or other methods will not be accepted.

(2) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM immediately after the bidding. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the Memorandum will not be permitted.

(3) A PVRM can only be assigned to a motor vehicle which is registered in the name of the purchaser. The Certificate of Incorporation must be produced immediately by the purchaser if a vehicle registration mark purchased is to be registered under the name of a body corporate.

(4) The display of a PVRM on a motor vehicle should be in compliance with the requirements stipulated in Schedule 4 of the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations.

(5) Any change to the arrangement of letters, numerals and blank spaces of a PVRM, i.e. single and two rows as auctioned, will not be allowed.

(6) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the PVRM to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the PVRM within 12 months, allocation of the PVRM will be cancelled and arranged for re-allocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

"Upon completion of the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM, the purchaser will be issued a receipt and a Certificate of Allocation of Personalised Registration Mark. The Certificate of Allocation will serve to prove the holdership of the PVRM. Potential buyers of vehicles bearing a PVRM should check the Certificate of Allocation with the sellers and pay attention to the details therein. For transfer of vehicle ownership, this certificate together with other required documents should be sent to the TD for processing," the spokesman added.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of PVRM, which is available at the department's licensing offices or can be downloaded from its website, [www.td.gov.hk/en/public\\_services/vehicle\\_registration\\_mark/pvr\\_m\\_auction/index.html](http://www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services/vehicle_registration_mark/pvr_m_auction/index.html).

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## LCQ5: “One bag for two uses” of designated bags under municipal solid waste charging

Following is a question by the Hon Judy Chan and a reply by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, in the Legislative Council today (March 20):

Question:

To tie in with the implementation of municipal solid waste charging, the Government is setting up a territory-wide retail network of designated bags (D-Bags). It also encourages authorised retailers to, apart from selling multiple D-Bags in a pack, sell single D-Bag at the checkout counter in place of plastic shopping bags (PSBs) for customers to carry goods, with a view to achieving the effect of "one bag for two uses". However, there are views that customers tend to go for PSBs which are cheaper, hence causing unnecessary wastage. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that the authorities will offer authorised retailers a service fee similar to retail commission for their provision of retail sales service of D-Bags, of the average service fee rate;

(2) given that a "retention" operation approach is currently adopted for the charges collected under the Plastic Shopping Bag Charging Scheme, how the authorities will prevent authorised retailers from inclining to sell PSBs for a higher profit instead of selling more environmentally friendly single D-Bag with dual uses; and

(3) whether it has plans to require authorised retailers to cease selling PSBs in the foreseeable future; if so, of the timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In order to reduce the usage and disposal of plastic shopping bags (PSBs), the Government implemented the first phase of the PSB Charging Scheme in July 2009, covering some 3 000 retail outlets, which were mostly major supermarket chains, convenience stores as well as healthcare and cosmetics stores. The Scheme was expanded to cover the entire retail sector in April 2015. To maintain the effectiveness of the Scheme to reduce waste, we implemented measures to enhance the Scheme on December 31, 2022, including increasing the minimum charge per PSB from \$0.5 to \$1 and tightening the

scope of exemption. Upon implementation of the enhanced Scheme, according to the information obtained by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) from major retail groups (including major supermarket chains and convenience stores) in Hong Kong, the overall distribution of PSBs (excluding flat-top bags) dropped by more than 60 per cent in January and February 2023 (i.e. the first two months after the implementation of the enhanced Scheme) as compared to the same period in 2022, and the distribution of the newly regulated flat-top bags by major supermarket chains even dropped by more than 80 per cent, showing significant reductions.

To facilitate the implementation of municipal solid waste (MSW) charging on August 1, 2024, the EPD has established a retail network covering all the districts in Hong Kong to enable the public in purchasing designated bags (DBs) and designated labels (DLs) to pay the MSW charge. To strengthen the promotion on waste reduction and reuse of resources, as well as further reducing the usage and disposal of PSBs, the EPD encourages retailers to sell single DBs at the checkout counter as an alternative to PSBs for carrying goods to achieve the effect of "one bag for dual use".

Our replies to the questions raised by the Hon Judy Chan are as follows:

(1) The retail network of DBs and DLs comprises around 3 000 outlets covering supermarkets, convenience stores, pharmacies and online platforms. Sixteen major retail chains have signed the Authorization Agreement to become authorised retailers to gradually commence the sales of DBs and DLs at around 2 500 outlets and 13 online platforms. In addition, we have signed agreements with two wholesalers to provide support to more than 600 small stores (including small- and medium-sized pharmacies) in selling DBs and DLs. The outlets will gradually provide the retail service, with more than 400 of them selling DBs and DLs to the public at present. Details of the outlets have already been publicised on the MSW charging thematic website and will be updated from time to time. As the sale of DBs and DLs incurs various operating costs, such as shop rental costs, inventory management, logistics distribution system and manpower deployment, the EPD offers service fee to authorised retailers to help with these costs. The service fee received by individual retailers is determined by certain objective criteria, including the number of participating physical retail outlets, areas covered by the outlets, their experience in selling garbage bags or household cleaning products, the size of logistics fleets, the number of registered users of online platforms, the variety of products to be sold and whether they are providing "one bag for dual use" service. The rate of retail service fee received by each retailer is a consensus reached between the EPD and the retailer through negotiations and is sensitive commercial information. The Authorization Agreement signed between the EPD and each authorised retailer also stipulates that the rate of retail service fee shall not be disclosed. We are therefore unable to provide such information.

(2) On the implementation of "one bag for dual use", more than 90 per cent of the authorised retail outlets of DBs have agreed to sell single DBs at the checkout counter in the future to enable the public to buy DBs for carrying purchased goods and afterwards wrapping waste for disposal. There is no need

to purchase additional plastic bags. Since the public is required to use DBs for waste disposal after the implementation of MSW charging, additional costs will be incurred if they choose to purchase other plastic bags instead of DBs to carry their goods when shopping, regardless of how cheap the other plastic bags are, they will be paying more as a whole. While the public may not have adapted to the use of DBs at the early stage of the implementation of MSW charging, it is certain that eventually they will be more inclined towards "one bag for dual use" and purchase DBs in lieu of PSBs to reduce their expenditure. On this, we have noticed that some authorised retailers have begun planning to cease the sale of regular plastic bags in the future and sell only DBs to reduce their costs.

(3) As mentioned above, more than 90 per cent of the authorised retail outlets have committed to providing the services of "one bag for dual use". We will continue to promote the arrangements and its advantages through publicity and education, and encourage more retailers to provide such service to promote waste reduction and reuse of resources, with a view to further reducing the usage and disposal of PSBs. We believe that as the public has gradually adopted the habit of waste reduction and recycling, as well as bringing their own bags when shopping, more people will choose to purchase DBs to carry their goods when necessary so that their expenditure would be reduced. The current need for retailers to sell other PSBs will gradually decrease. As aforementioned, we have noticed that some authorised retailers are planning to cease the sale of regular plastic bags in the future and sell only DBs to reduce their costs. We therefore consider it unnecessary to mandate the authorised retailers to stop selling PSBs through legal means.