

Secretary for Health and delegation proceed to visit Dongguan (with photos)

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, and his delegation headed to Dongguan from Guangzhou today (March 14) to continue their two-day visit, meeting Dongguan Municipal Government and health officials, and visiting the Dongguan Tungwah Hospital.

The delegation first met with Deputy Mayor of the Dongguan Municipal People's Government Ms Li Jun and the Director of the Dongguan Municipal Health Bureau, Ms Zhang Qiaoli. Professor Lo introduced to them the latest healthcare developments in Hong Kong and engaged with them in a thorough exchange on issues such as the Elderly Health Care Voucher Greater Bay Area Pilot Scheme, optimisation of hospital management, improvement of public health and enhancement of healthcare service quality.

Professor Lo said, "The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government endeavors to keep strengthening and deepening healthcare exchanges and co-operation with Mainland cities to promote healthcare development in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area cities in a bid to enhance the quality and efficiency of medical and healthcare services, thereby contributing to the major national strategy of 'Healthy China' through concerted efforts."

The delegation visited the Dongguan Tungwah Hospital in the afternoon. The hospital was included in the Pilot Scheme as one of the pilot medical institutions by the Health Bureau last month. Hong Kong elderly persons who are eligible for receiving Elderly Health Care Vouchers will be able to use the vouchers to pay for outpatient healthcare services they receive at designated medical centres or medical service departments of the Dongguan Tungwah Hospital later this year.

Deputy Secretary for Health Mr Eddie Lee; the Senior Advisor (Secretary for Health's Office), Dr Joe Fan; and the Deputising Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority, Dr Simon Tang, of the Hong Kong delegation also joined the visit programme today. They returned to Hong Kong afterwards this afternoon.



[SCST visits Xi'an and Qingdao to promote Hong Kong tourism](#)

The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, today (March 14) finished a three-day visit to Xi'an and Qingdao. With the expansion of the Individual Visit Scheme (IVS) to Xi'an and Qingdao starting from March 6, Mr Yeung visited the two cities to call on provincial leaders and attend briefing sessions for the media and the tourism sector, where he promoted Hong Kong tourism as well as introducing travelling experiences and the latest tourism developments in Hong Kong.

Mr Yeung said, "We are very grateful for the Central Government's positive response to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government's proposal of enhancing the IVS. With the number of eligible cities expanded to 51, this will be very conducive to the development of Hong Kong's tourism sector. We have at once launched publicity activities in the newly added

cities, Xi'an and Qingdao, with a view to providing travellers from the two cities with quality services."

During the trip, Mr Yeung was accompanied by the Commissioner for Tourism, Ms Vivian Sum, and the Executive Director of the Hong Kong Tourism Board, Mr Dane Cheng. On March 12, Mr Yeung arrived in Xi'an in Shaanxi Province, where he met with Vice Governor of the Shaanxi Provincial Government Mr Xu Mingfei, and the Director of the Department of Culture and Tourism of Shaanxi, Mr Gao Yang, to discuss ways to strengthen and develop tourism activities between Hong Kong and Xi'an. Mr Yeung then continued his visit to Qingdao in Shandong Province on March 13 to meet with the Mayor of the Qingdao Municipal People's Government, Mr Zhao Haozhi, and Deputy Secretary of the CPC Qingdao Municipal Committee Ms Zhang Hui separately to exchange views on driving tourism developments.

In 2022, there were 12.9959 million usual residents in Xi'an, and its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was RMB1.148651 trillion. Between 2014 and 2023, 1.17 million travellers from Xi'an visited Hong Kong. In comparison, there were 10.3421 million usual residents in Qingdao in 2022 and its GDP was RMB1.492075 trillion, while 0.7 million travellers from Qingdao visited Hong Kong between 2014 and 2023.

Mr Yeung will return to Hong Kong tonight.

[Korea-based AI investment solution company upgrades its Hong Kong office to regional headquarters](#)

Invest Hong Kong announced today (March 14) that it has supported a Korea-based artificial intelligence (AI) investment solution company, Qraft Technologies, to upgrade its regional office in Hong Kong to a regional headquarters, leveraging the city's robust financial system as the base to expand globally.

The Associate Director-General of Investment Promotion, Mr Charles Ng, said, "We're happy to see the upgrade of Qraft Technologies in Hong Kong. It shows the company's ambition in expanding its business globally via Hong Kong, as well as its confidence in the city's fast-growing fintech ecosystem."

Qraft Technologies set up its regional office in Hong Kong in 2021, offering AI-based investment solutions for asset managers. According to its Chief Operating Officer and Asia Pacific Chief Executive Officer, Mr Francis Geeseok Oh, Hong Kong is the ideal place when the company is looking for a

regional base for its global expansion.

He explained, "The city's robust financial system, shaped by a century-long history of providing financial services to the world and coupled with well-established infrastructure, makes it an excellent choice to swiftly identify market opportunities."

He added, "The calibre of professionals available in Hong Kong surpasses that in many other jurisdictions. For an AI investment solution company like Qraft, it is paramount that we cultivate a best-in-class talent pool within the industry."

Qraft Technologies actively drives and makes critical business development decisions across its global presence from its Hong Kong office, according to Mr Oh. He said, "We plan to strengthen our team in Hong Kong and explore the possibility of establishing an additional subsidiary either in Europe or the Middle East."

For more information about Qraft Technologies, please visit graftec.com/.

[Award Scheme for Learning Experiences under Qualifications Framework opens for applications](#)

The 2024 Award Scheme for Learning Experiences under the Qualifications Framework (QF) will open for applications from tomorrow (March 15) until May 31. Practitioners from 23 industries implementing the QF (see Annex) are welcome to apply.

A spokesman for the Education Bureau said that the Award Scheme aims to encourage practitioners who have excelled themselves in continuous learning to broaden their horizons through engaging in learning activities held locally or around the world. These experiences will enable them to keep abreast of the latest developments of the industry and extend their exposure and networks, thereby realising their personal and career goals. The theme for the Award Scheme this year is "Together, go further". This theme signifies that the Award Scheme not only assists awardees in participating in learning activities worldwide but also supports them in achieving their career aspirations.

Since its inception in 2013, the Award Scheme has attracted more than 2 300 applicants from different industries, over 700 of whom were awarded. Over 60 per cent of the awardees participated in learning activities outside Hong

Kong, while approximately 40 per cent engaged in local learning activities. The Award Scheme subsidises practitioners to participate in learning activities and helps reinforce their conviction in lifelong learning. Through continuous learning, they are able to upgrade their knowledge and skills, become lifelong-learning role models for their respective industries, and help promote the QF.

The spokesman added that the learning activities in which practitioners could participate under the Award Scheme include competitions, seminars, sharing sessions, exhibitions and study tours. Awardees engaging in local learning activities would receive an award of \$10,000, while those engaging in learning activities outside Hong Kong would receive an award of \$30,000.

For details, please visit the website (www.hkqf.gov.hk/AwardScheme) and the Facebook page (www.facebook.com/QFAwardScheme) of the Award Scheme.

[Two property owners fined over \\$140,000 in total for not complying with removal orders](#)

Two property owners who failed to comply with removal orders issued under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123) were convicted and fined over \$140,000 in total at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts last month.

The first case involved an unauthorised structure with an area of about 95 square meters re-erected (after previous removal) on the roof of a residential building on Lok Chui Street, Tuen Mun and four supporting frames for air-conditioning units attached to the relevant parapet wall. As the unauthorised building works (UBWs) were carried out without the prior approval and consent from the Buildings Department (BD), a removal order was served on the owner under section 24(1) of the BO.

Failing to comply with the removal order, the owner was prosecuted by the BD, and the hearing was held at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts on February 23. The owner was fined \$67,260 upon conviction, although during the hearing the owner alleged that the UBWs had been removed.

The second case involved three unauthorised structures with a total area of about 50 square metres erected on the flat roof of a composite building on Luk Yuen Street, Tuen Mun. As the UBWs were carried out without the prior approval and consent from the BD, a removal order was served on the owner under section 24(1) of the BO.

Failing to comply with the removal order, the owner was prosecuted by the BD and was fined \$76,200 upon conviction at the Tuen Mun Magistrates'

Courts on February 23.

A spokesman for the BD said today (March 14), "UBWs may lead to serious consequences. Owners must comply with removal orders without delay. The BD will continue to take enforcement action against owners who have failed to comply with removal orders, including instigation of prosecution, so as to ensure building safety."

Failure to comply with a removal order without reasonable excuse is a serious offence under the B0. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$200,000 and one year's imprisonment, and a further fine of \$20,000 for each day that the offence continues.