

Speech by CE at “Masters of Abstraction” Gala Dinner (English only) (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the "Masters of Abstraction" Gala Dinner this evening (January 17):

Mrs Wetzlar (Managing Director, Heidelberg Laureate Forum Foundation, Mrs Ruth Wetzlar), Mr Ong (Chairman, Innovative Business Foundation, Mr Michael Ong), Mr Badge (photographer, "Masters of Abstraction", Mr Peter Badge), distinguished laureates, professors, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening.

It is a great pleasure to join you for today's "Masters of Abstraction" Gala Dinner.

Allow me, first, to welcome to Hong Kong the five Fields Medal, A.M Turing Award and ACM Prize in Computing Laureates here with us this evening. Each of you, through transformative research and scholarship, has made your indelible mark in the fields of computing science or mathematics. In doing so, you have profoundly shaped our world, our lives and our future. For that, we are all very grateful.

My thanks, as well, to the Heidelberg Laureate Forum Foundation. The Foundation's annual Heidelberg Laureate Forum offers promising young researchers around the world the opportunity to interact with laureates of the three prestigious prizes I've noted, together with winners of the Abel Prize and the Rolf Nevanlinna Prize. For one week, they engage in free-flowing, cross-generational dialogue with esteemed laureates in Heidelberg, home to Germany's oldest university. And I am pleased to say that I said this with first-hand experience, as my younger son Joshua was a participant in the Heidelberg Laureate Forum in 2015.

Last summer, I had the distinct pleasure of joining the annual Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting in Lindau, Germany. I understand that annual gathering of Nobel Laureates and brilliant young scientists inspired the Heidelberg Laureate Forum founders. Together, the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings and the Heidelberg Laureate Forum connect the next generation of scientific leaders.

That, ladies and gentlemen, resonates with my ambitions for Hong Kong, a city long celebrated for connecting companies from the Mainland of China and all over the world. Here, they trade and invest, do business, find partners and, ultimately, excel. My vision is to apply that business connect-and-excel model to innovation and technology.

Indeed, since becoming Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special

Administrative Region in July 2017, I have placed innovation and technology development at the top of my policy agenda. To that end, I've launched an eight-pronged strategy to promote innovation and technology in Hong Kong. To date, my Government has committed US\$10 billion towards a variety of innovation and technology initiatives, ranging from boosting research funding for universities to building a huge new science park in cooperation with the Shenzhen Government.

Hong Kong enjoys full support from the Central People's Government under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle. For more than two decades, since the return of Hong Kong to our motherland, the "One Country, Two Systems" principle has given us benefits available to no other economy. As the multilateral business bridge between the Mainland and the rest of the world, Hong Kong has flourished in business and finance. And I have no doubt that singular advantage will help power our success in innovation and technology as well.

World-class talent, of course, is essential to realising that vision. It's why, last June, we launched the Technology Talent Admission Scheme. It enables our technology companies and institutes to admit on a fast track basis overseas and Mainland technology talent in such technology areas as biotech, AI, cybersecurity, robotics and data analytics.

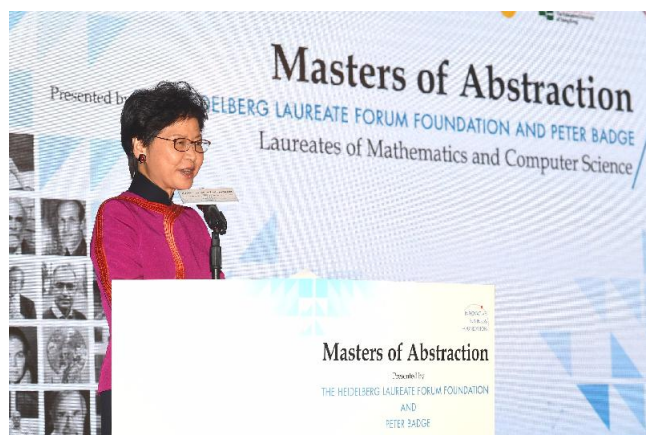
In addition, last August, we established another scheme, the Technology Talent Scheme. The postdoctoral hub programme funds companies looking to recruit postdoctoral talent for scientific research and product development. The Scheme also funds local companies on a two-to-one matching basis, training their staff in high-end technologies, especially those related to Industry 4.0, through the Re-industrialisation & Technology Training Programme.

My Government is equally committed to STEM education. We are determined that our future generations adapt and thrive in a technology-driven world. STEM education's success cannot be achieved in schools alone. Close co-operation between government, academia and technology companies is essential. And that collaboration must be both global and local, if we are to compete with the world in the 21st century of boundless opportunity. Which is why I am delighted that the five distinguished Laureates with us this evening will share their wisdom with young Hong Kong scientists and students at a university forum tomorrow.

I'm hopeful, as well, that tonight will be the beginning of a long and mutually rewarding relationship between Hong Kong and the Heidelberg Laureate Forum. To that end, my Government, our universities and research institutes have been pleased to promote the 2019 Heidelberg Laureate Forum, which takes place this September, to our young mathematicians and computing scientists, encouraging their interest and participation.

My thanks to Michael Ong and his Innovative Business Foundation for organising tonight's event and for his continuing efforts in promoting science and technology in Hong Kong.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you all a very enjoyable evening and a New Year blessed with health, happiness and the universal blessings of scientific progress. Thank you very much.



Two kinds of prepackaged protein bars may contain allergen (peanuts)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (January 17) said that two kinds of prepackaged protein bars manufactured in the United States might contain an allergen, peanuts, but it was not declared on the products' food labels. Consumers who are allergic to peanuts are advised not to eat the products concerned. The trade should also stop using or selling the products concerned immediately.

Product details are as follows:

- (1) Product name: Protein Bar, Chocolate Sea Salt
Brand: RXBAR
Place of origin: US
Net weight: 52 grams/1.83 ounces per pack (12 packs per box)
Best-before date: June 30, 2019
- (2) Product name: Protein Bar, Mango Pineapple
Brand: RXBAR
Place of origin: US
Net weight: 52 grams/1.83 ounces per pack (12 packs per box)
Best-before date: April 21, 2019

"The CFS, through its Food Incident Surveillance System, noted a notice issued by the US authorities concerned that several kinds of RXBAR products are under recall because they may contain peanuts but undeclared on the food label," a spokesman for the CFS said.

Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately followed up with major local importers and retailers. Preliminary investigation revealed that an

online vendor, Action Panda, had imported a total of eight boxes of the affected batches of the two abovementioned products and some of them were sold. The vendor has stopped sale and removed from shelves the affected batches of products and will initiate a recall according to CFS' instructions. Enquiries about the recall can be made to the vendor's hotline at 5211 8027 during office hours.

"Peanuts are a known food allergen. Those who are allergic to it may develop symptoms like vomiting, diarrhoea, asthma and rash upon consumption. In severe cases anaphylactic shock may even develop," the spokesman said.

He advised consumers who are allergic to peanuts not to consume the products concerned. Those who feel unwell after consuming them should seek medical treatment.

The Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap 132W) require that all prepackaged food for sale in Hong Kong should list out the food's ingredients in its label. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The CFS will alert the trade, continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action. Investigation is on-going.

CFS urges public not to consume a batch of imported prepackaged smoked salmon suspected to be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (January 17) urged the public not to consume a batch of prepackaged smoked salmon imported from New Zealand due to possible contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes*, a pathogen. The trade should stop using or selling the product concerned immediately if they possess it.

Details of the product are as follows:

Product name: Beech Wood Smoked Slices
Brand: Regal New Zealand King Salmon
Place of origin: New Zealand
Manufacturer: The New Zealand King Salmon Co. Ltd
Importer: PARKnSHOP(HK) Limited
Net weight: 100 grams per pack
Batch code: M362D
Expiry date: January 28, 2019

"The CFS received a notification from the New Zealand concerned authorities through the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) that the abovementioned product might have been contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* and is being recalled. According to the information provided by INFOSAN, a local importer, PARKnSHOP(HK) Limited has imported the affected product into Hong Kong," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The CFS immediately contacted the importer concerned for follow-up. Preliminary investigation showed that the importer had imported 60 packs of the above-mentioned batch of product and some of it was sold. The CFS has instructed the importer to stop sale and remove from shelves the affected batch of product and initiate a recall. Enquiries about the recall can be made to the importer's hotline at 2606 8658 during office hours.

"*Listeria monocytogenes* can be easily destroyed by cooking but can survive and multiply at refrigerator temperature. Most healthy individuals do not develop symptoms or only have mild symptoms like fever, muscle pain, headache, nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea when infected. However, severe complications such as septicemia, meningitis or even death may occur in newborns, the elderly and those with a weaker immune system. Although infected pregnant women may just experience mild symptoms generally, the infection of *Listeria monocytogenes* may cause miscarriage, infant death, preterm birth, or severe infection in newborns," the spokesman said.

The spokesman urged consumers not to consume the affected products if they have bought any. The trade should also stop using or selling the product concerned immediately if they possess them.

The CFS will alert the trade to the incident, continue to follow up and take appropriate action. Investigation is ongoing.

CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza A infection and outbreaks of influenza A at primary school and kindergartens

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 17) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection, as well as four influenza A outbreaks at a primary school in Eastern District and three kindergartens in Sha Tin, Kowloon City and Central.

The case of severe paediatric influenza A infection involves a 6-year-old boy with good past health. He has presented with fever, cough and runny

nose since January 5. He later developed drowsiness and confusion and was admitted to Queen Mary Hospital for management on January 9. He is now in a stable condition. His nasopharyngeal aspirate tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection and encephalopathy.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period. His younger sister and brother with recent upper respiratory symptoms earlier sought medical attention without admission and have been in a stable condition. His other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

Regarding outbreaks at schools, the outbreak at the primary school in Eastern District affected 11 boys and nine girls, aged 5 to 11, who have developed fever, cough and sore throat since January 7. Nineteen of them sought medical attention but none required hospitalisation. They are all in a stable condition. The nasopharyngeal swab specimens of two affected students tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing.

The outbreak at the kindergarten in Sha Tin affected 12 boys and 10 girls, aged 3 to 5, who have developed similar symptoms since January 8. All of them sought medical attention. Three students required hospitalisation and one was discharged following treatment. All patients are in a stable condition. The respiratory specimens of two affected students tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing.

The outbreak at the kindergarten in Kowloon City involves 12 boys and eight girls, aged 3 to 5, who have developed similar symptoms since January 5. All of them sought medical attention. Five students required hospitalisation and were discharged following treatment. All patients are in a stable condition. The respiratory specimens of seven affected students tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing.

The outbreak at the kindergarten in Central involves three boys and 20 girls, aged 3 to 6, who have developed similar symptoms since January 9. Fifteen of them sought medical attention. Among them, one student required hospitalisation and was discharged following treatment. All patients are in a stable condition. The nasopharyngeal swab specimens of two affected students tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted site visits to the four schools and advised the schools to adopt infection control measures against respiratory infections. The schools have been put under medical surveillance.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "To prevent outbreaks of influenza and other respiratory infections, it is of prime importance that children with fever, regardless of the presence of respiratory symptoms, should not be allowed to attend school. They should seek medical advice and avoid school till 48 hours after the fever has subsided. Schools should also measure and record students' body temperature properly."

Schools are reminded to follow the [Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases](#) on preventive and control measures as well as management of outbreaks, which should be reported to the CHP for prompt follow-up.

"Particularly, children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are urged to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination. They should promptly seek medical advice if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people," the spokesman added.

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccination as early as possible for personal protection, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses. For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).

[Man arrested for suspected illegal sale of unregistered pharmaceutical products \(with photo\)](#)

The Department of Health (DH) today (January 17) conducted an operation against the sale of unregistered pharmaceutical products, during which a 31-year-old man was arrested by the Police for suspected illegal sale of unregistered pharmaceutical products and Part 1 poisons.

â€‹ Acting upon a public complaint, some pharmaceutical products for slimming and muscle pain were found offered for sale via a social media platform and the Internet. The products are labelled in Japanese and do not bear Hong Kong pharmaceutical product registration numbers.

â€‹ The products for slimming are believed to contain frusemide, rosuvastatin or levothyroxine while the product for muscle pain is believed to contain felbinac. The above ingredients are all Part 1 poisons under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap 138).

â€‹ Frusemide is a diuretic and its side effects include low blood pressure and electrolyte imbalance. Rosuvastatin is used for the treatment of hypercholesterolemia and its side effects include muscle pain and headache. Levothyroxine is used for the treatment of hypothyroidism and its side

effects include fast and irregular heart beat and hypertension. Felbinac is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug used topically to relieve pain. Inappropriate use of felbinac may cause erythema and dermatitis.

â€‹ Products containing the above ingredients should only be used upon the advice of a medical practitioner and be supplied by a pharmacy under the supervision of a registered pharmacist. Products containing frusemide, rosuvastatin or levothyroxine are also prescription medicines.

â€‹ According to the Ordinance, all pharmaceutical products must be registered with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong before they can be legally sold in the market. Illegal sale or possession of Part 1 poisons and unregistered pharmaceutical products are criminal offences. The maximum penalty for each offence is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment.

â€‹ The DH's investigation is ongoing.

â€‹ The DH spokesman strongly urged members of the public not to buy products of unknown or doubtful composition, or to consume products from unknown sources. All registered pharmaceutical products carry a Hong Kong registration number on the package in the format HK-XXXXX. Safety, quality and efficacy of unregistered pharmaceutical products are not guaranteed.

â€‹ Weight control should be achieved through a balanced diet and appropriate exercise. The public should consult healthcare professionals before using any medication for weight control. The public may visit the website of the Drug Office of the DH for [health messages on weight control and slimming products](#) and [information on slimming products with undeclared Western drug ingredients](#).

â€‹ People who have purchased the above products should stop using them and consult healthcare professionals for advice if they are in doubt or feeling unwell after use. They can submit the products to the DH's Drug Office at Room 1856, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong, during office hours for disposal.

