

SFST starts visit to Germany (with photos)

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, started his visit programme in Germany after arriving in Frankfurt yesterday (October 23, Frankfurt time).

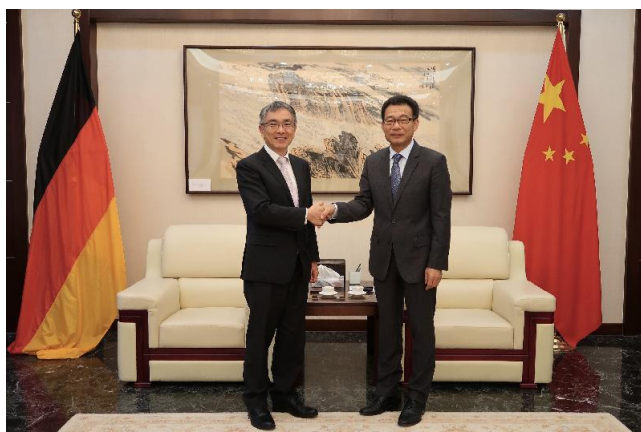
Mr Lau started the day by visiting Ginmon Wealth Management where he was briefed on the algorithm-based portfolio management technology the company had developed that promises excess long-term returns for investors. He shared that as a premier international asset and wealth management centre in the region with highly developed information and communications technology and a vibrant financial technology (Fintech) ecosystem, Hong Kong provides an ideal platform for them to market their FinTech solution for portfolio management business. He welcomed German financial institutions to establish their presence in Hong Kong.

Mr Lau then paid a courtesy call on the Chinese Consul-General in Frankfurt, Mr Wang Shunqing. Mr Lau took the opportunity to brief the Consul-General on Hong Kong's latest developments and thank him for supporting and offering assistance to Hong Kong people.

Next, Mr Lau attended a business luncheon co-organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Berlin. In his keynote speech, Mr Lau highlighted Hong Kong's paramount role as a capital raising and asset and wealth management centre. Describing Hong Kong as a gateway city to the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Southeast Asia and the economies along the Belt and Road, Mr Lau told the attending business leaders that the city's global outlook, international connections and cosmopolitan flavor have made it a sure welcoming place for German businesses, German institutes and German professionals.

In the afternoon, Mr Lau visited Plug and Play Fintech Centre, a global innovation platform specialising in growing technology startups. He met with the management team and was briefed on their accelerator programme, innovation services provided for startups and venture capital investment. He also encouraged Plug and Play to expand their accelerator programme to Hong Kong.

Mr Lau then departed for Zurich, Switzerland in the evening and will continue his visit tomorrow (October 24, Zurich time).



Rubella cases in Japan closely monitored

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is closely monitoring an increase in the number of rubella (also known as "German Measles") cases in Japan and appealed to the travellers and members of the public for vigilance and reiterated that vaccination is the most effective way to prevent the disease.

According to the information from the health authority of Japan, an ongoing outbreak of rubella is observed in the country. A total of 1 289 cases of rubella have been recorded in 2018 (as of October 17) with 914 cases reported in the past six weeks, as compared to 93, 126 and 163 cases recorded in 2017, 2016 and 2015 respectively. Among these 1 289 cases in 2018, 1 062 (82.4%) affected males with 63% of them aged between 30-49 years. The cumulative incidence in 2018 was highest in Chiba (37.6 cases per million population), followed by Tokyo (32 cases per million population) and Kanagawa (17.9 cases per million population).

Immunisation against rubella is the most effective way to prevent the disease. People who intend to travel to Japan are advised to review their vaccination history and past medical history. People who had received

rubella-containing vaccine documented by vaccination record, past history of laboratory confirmed rubella infection or positive blood test for rubella antibody are considered to be immune against rubella. Otherwise, they can be considered as non-immune to rubella.

"As rubella-containing vaccine is contraindicated in pregnant women, all pregnant women and women preparing for pregnancy who are non-immune to rubella should not travel to Japan during the outbreak period," a spokesman for the CHP said today (October 23).

For those without rubella vaccination, with unknown vaccination history or unknown immunity against rubella, they are advised to consult their doctor for advice on vaccination, which is usually given together with mumps and rubella vaccines as Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) combined vaccine. As it takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop and provide protection against rubella, non-immune travellers are advised to plan and get vaccinated ahead (except pregnant women and women preparing for pregnancy).

Local children aged under one year are not due for MMR vaccination under the [Hong Kong Childhood Immunisation Programme](#) (HKCIP). As they are susceptible to rubella, they are advised not to travel to Japan during the outbreak. If people must travel to Japan with children under one year during the outbreak period, they have to consult their doctor for advice.

The CHP has been liaising with the World Health Organization as well as the Japanese health authority for further information and will continue to closely monitor the situation.

Locally, as of October 22 this year, the CHP recorded six cases of rubella infection in 2018 affecting two males and four females with ages ranging from three to 65 years.

The spokesman explained that rubella infection is a highly infectious disease caused by the rubella virus. It can be transmitted by contact with secretions from nose and throat of infected persons through droplet spread or direct contact with patients. The patient can pass the disease to other persons from one week before to one week after onset of rash. Rubella infection during pregnancy can result in abnormal development of the fetus, especially during the first trimester.

In Hong Kong, routine rubella vaccination has been provided to all girls at primary six since 1978, followed by the introduction of MMR vaccine under the HKCIP for both boys and girls at 12 months in 1990. In addition, the DH conducted the Special MMR Vaccination Campaign in 1997, with over a million children and youngsters aged 1 to 19 immunised. Currently, children are given the first dose of MMR vaccine at one year old, followed by a second dose at primary one under the HKCIP. The coverage of MMR vaccination in Hong Kong is over 95 per cent at primary one.

The CHP will issue a letter to all doctors in Hong Kong to appeal for heightened vigilance against rubella cases in Japan. The CHP will also inform

the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) about the outbreak of rubella in Japan and provide relevant health advice. The TIC is requested to help relay the information to the industry, reminding travellers to take relevant precautionary health measures.

Besides being vaccinated against rubella, to prevent rubella members of the public are advised to:

- * Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- * Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- * Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- * Wash hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, e.g. after sneezing; and
- * Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly.

If travellers develop symptoms of rubella, they should consult doctors promptly and reveal their travel history.

For more information on rubella, the public may visit the CHP's rubella page (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/101027.html). They can also visit the Travel Health Service's website (www.travelhealth.gov.hk/eindex.html) for the latest travel health advice.

Beauty parlour and its director cum saleslady convicted for applying false trade description

A beauty parlour and its female director cum saleslady were respectively fined \$60,000 and sentenced to imprisonment for six months suspended for three years today (October 23) at Eastern Magistrates' Courts for having applied a false trade description to the beauty service supplied, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

A Customs officer earlier conducted a test-buy operation at a beauty parlour in Causeway Bay. The female director cum saleslady claimed to provide beauty treatment with a beauty device of a particular brand.

After investigation, the beauty device was found not produced by the manufacturer of the brand.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO and consumers to procure services at reputable shops.

Under the TD0, any trader who applies a false trade description to a service supplied to a consumer commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TD0 to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

Excessive cadmium found in prepackaged spinach sample

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (October 23) announced that a prepackaged spinach sample was detected with cadmium, a metallic contaminant, exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the incident.

Details of the product are as follows:

Product name: Baby Spinach
Product brand: Earthbound Farm
Place of origin: US
Net weight: 5 ounces/142 grams per pack
Use-by date: September 29, 2018

"The CFS collected the spinach sample from a supermarket in Ma On Shan for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The result showed that the sample contained cadmium at a level of 0.36 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the legal limit of 0.1ppm," a CFS spokesman said.

"The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and is tracing the source of the affected product," the spokesman added.

According to the Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations (Cap 132V), any person who sells food with metallic contamination above the legal limits is liable upon conviction to a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

"Based on the level of cadmium detected in the sample, adverse health effects will not be caused under usual consumption," the spokesman said.

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

[Agenda of tomorrow's LegCo meeting revised](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The agenda of the Legislative Council (LegCo) meeting, scheduled for tomorrow (October 24) at 11am in the Chamber of the LegCo Complex, has been revised. In addition to the original items, the LegCo President has given permission for Mr Gary Fan to ask an urgent oral question on the urgent measures to prevent and deal with large-scale disruptions of railway services under Rule 24(4) of the Rules of Procedure.

For the latest agenda items of tomorrow's LegCo meeting, please refer to the LegCo Website:

www.legco.gov.hk/yr18-19/english/counmtg/agenda/cm20181024.htm.