

SEE exchanges views with around 400 young people (with photos)

The Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, today (October 29) attended the "Dialogue with the Secretary for Environment and Ecology" session on the public day of the 18th Eco Expo Asia to exchange views with young people on the ways to achieve carbon neutrality in Hong Kong.

To tie in with the theme of this year's Expo "Taking the Leap towards Carbon Neutrality", Mr Tse shared and exchanged views on environmental protection with around 400 students and young people from 12 different schools and youth uniformed groups, covering topics such as impacts of global climate change, Hong Kong's goal to achieve carbon neutrality before 2050, applications of green technological innovations and daily low carbon tips. During the question and answer session, responses from the young people attending the session were overwhelming, in which they actively asked questions and shared their views on environmental protection issues.

Mr Tse pointed out that young people are important stakeholders in tackling climate crisis. He called on them to practise what they have learned about environmental protection and integrate it into their daily lives. By changing their habits and reducing carbon footprint collectively, they can lead Hong Kong towards a low-carbon future. He also encouraged young people aspired to join the environment-related field to study hard, to explore their interests and expertise in the industry, and to devote themselves to environmental protection work in the future, so as to contribute to combating climate change and sustainable development.

The Director of the Department of Educational, Scientific and Technological Affairs of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Ms Guo Jianhua, also attended the event and presented certificates to the participating schools and youth uniform groups.

The Eco Expo Asia opens to the public for free on the last day of the event. In addition to the "Dialogue with the Secretary for Environment and Ecology" session, activities for the public day also include guided tours, upcycling workshops, green markets and environmental seminars. Speakers from the Hong Kong Observatory, the Water Supplies Department, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, the Civil Engineering and Development Department, the Environmental Protection Department and the City University of Hong Kong shared environmental protection information and knowledge with members of the public in environmental seminars to enhance public awareness on environmental protection. Moreover, environmental, social and governance (ESG) is a valued topic in recent years. This year's Eco Expo Asia also arranged the "ESG Employment Base" for the first time, providing diversified employment and development opportunities for young people who are interested

in joining the ESG sector.



[Hong Kong Customs detects dangerous drugs internal concealment case involving passenger at airport \(with photo\)](#)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs on October 27 detected a dangerous drugs internal concealment case involving an incoming passenger at Hong Kong International Airport and seized about 720 grams of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$770,000.

A female passenger, aged 30, arrived in Hong Kong from Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo via Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on that day. During customs clearance, Customs officers suspected that the passenger had dangerous drugs concealed inside her body cavity. She was then escorted to the hospital for examination.

Upon examination, the female passenger was confirmed by a doctor to have foreign objects concealed inside her body cavity. The woman was arrested immediately. As at 2pm today (October 29), the arrested person has discharged 60 pellets of suspected cocaine weighing about 720g in total.

An investigation is ongoing.

Following the resumption of normal travel and exchanges with the Mainland and other parts of the world, the number of visitors to Hong Kong has also been increasing steadily. Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance to combat transnational drug trafficking activities.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).



[Speech by FS at International Finance Forum 20th Anniversary and Annual Meeting 2023 \(English only\)](#)

Following is the pre-recorded video speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the International Finance Forum (IFF) Annual Meeting 2023 in celebration of IFF's 20th Anniversary today (October 29):

Distinguished speakers and guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am pleased to speak once again at the International Finance Forum, particularly on this auspicious occasion, its 20th anniversary. I regret only that I am not able to join you in person today.

The theme of today's forum, "The rise of Asia and Emerging Economies

driving global growth", smartly encapsulates the reality of the global economy, and the immense significance of Asia in shaping it, today and tomorrow.

Global economic outlook

At the beginning of the year, many of us, I'm sure, believed that the world was finally righting itself after three daunting pandemic years. That economic activities and supply chains would rebound and rapidly return to normal. Results, to date, unfortunately, have not met most expectations.

With inflation in advanced economies a continuing concern, monetary policies and higher interest rates are likely to stay tight longer than we thought.

Earlier this month, the IMF (International Monetary Fund) forecast that global economic growth would slow – from 3.5 per cent last year to 3.0 per cent this year – and continue to slacken in 2024, to a 2.9 per cent forecast growth.

The IMF also warned of downside risks, including commodity-price volatility, persistent underlying inflation, geo-economic fragmentation, increasing sovereign debt distress and the distress, too, of geopolitics, now including the incendiary situation in the Middle East.

Clearly, protectionism, decoupling or delinking through so-called "de-risking" are not in the common interest of the global community.

Asia as the source of growth

But still, Asia's growth prospects remain promising, offering some hope to the world's economy. Economic growth of emerging and developing Asia is forecast to climb from 4.5 per cent last year to 5.2 per cent in 2023, and is expected to achieve a solid 4.8 per cent in the coming year.

The Mainland's economy will continue to be an important driver of this process, contributing to about one-third of global economic growth this year and next.

Despite the pessimism and the negative narrative that surrounds it, the Mainland's economy picked up speed and beat expectations in the third quarter of 2023, bringing the combined growth of the first three quarters to 5.2 per cent. It is firmly on track to accomplish the target annual growth of 5 per cent this year.

And the Mainland's firm commitment to high-quality development, including its pursuit of technological innovation, green transition, high-level two-way opening up, and support for the private-sector economy, has charted a clear and visible trajectory of sustainable economic growth in the medium to long term.

Equally encouraging is the burgeoning development of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), which is on its way to being the fourth largest economy in the world. With its expanding market size, growing middle class and youthful population, ASEAN is set to further enhance the region's economic status.

Hong Kong's connector role

As for Hong Kong, thanks to the staunch support of the country, and the "one country, two systems" framework, we are in the unique position to connect the Mainland, Asia and the rest of the world.

And we have what it takes to capitalise on our singular connectivity. I'm talking about our common law system, a judiciary exercising its powers independently, the free flow of capital, talent and information, a simple and low tax regime, a deep pool of international capital, a well-educated workforce and world-class infrastructure and logistics services.

In finance, and in innovation and technology; in trade, shipping, aviation, and much more, Hong Kong is determined to connect the region and support its growth and prosperity.

Consider Hong Kong's status as an international financial centre, for example, where we have deep and sophisticated stock and bond markets, as well as a vibrant ecosystem of venture capital, private equity and asset management firms. They are here to serve the funding needs of enterprises and governments ranging from business expansion, infrastructure development to green transition.

Earlier this month, our Chief Executive led a 70-strong Hong Kong business and professional delegation to attend the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing. During the Forum, Hong Kong signed co-operation agreements for three Belt and Road projects worth, collectively, more than US\$450 million.

And the Hong Kong Monetary Authority also signed a Cooperation Framework Agreement with the Silk Road Fund. The two institutions will contribute up to RMB15 billion or equivalent to form an investment platform to invest in energy transition, infrastructure, ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) and other projects along the Belt and Road.

In his annual Policy Address released just a few days ago, our Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, underlined regional co-operation as a policy priority of this Government. We are keen and determined to further expand our strong ties with ASEAN countries, the Middle East and the Belt and Road countries. We are committed to enhancing connectivity and collaboration with them, working for mutual benefit and common prosperity for all.

This will all the more be bolstered by the many high-profile international events in Hong Kong in the coming months.

Tomorrow, our annual FinTech Week opens, welcoming an international audience of finance and fintech professionals. On November 7 and 8, the Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit returns to Hong Kong, to be attended by chairmen, CEOs and senior executives of top-notch global financial institutions. In December, Hong Kong will host the inaugural Priority Asia Summit, organised by the Saudi Arabia-based Future Investment Initiative Institute. In January next year, the annual Asian Financial Forum will be gathering global financial and business leaders, investors and entrepreneurs for dialogues and discussions.

Ladies and gentlemen, you are all welcome to visit Hong Kong, to experience the energy and vibrancy, and seize the opportunities offered by our great city.

Finally, I wish you all a rewarding day ahead. And my congratulations, once again, to the International Finance Forum on its 20th anniversary. I wish you the best of business and health in the years to come. Thank you.

Delegation of judges and judicial officers departs for Beijing for exchange visit

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

A delegation of judges and judicial officers from the Hong Kong Judiciary departed for Beijing for an exchange visit programme today (October 29). The programme is part of the on-going professional exchanges between the Hong Kong and Mainland judges and judicial officers.

The delegation includes 17 judges and judicial officers. It is led by Mr Justice Jeremy Poon Shiu-chor, Chief Judge of the High Court, with Mr Justice Johnson Lam Man-hon, Permanent Judge of the Court of Final Appeal, as the deputy head. During the visit to Beijing, the delegation will engage in exchanges and attend discussion forums and thematic talks on topics that include the Constitution and the Basic Law, judicial system, experience in handling litigations, mutual legal assistance between the Mainland and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and the latest developments of the country. There will also be visits to court facilities and facilities relating to technology and culture, etc.

The delegation will conclude the visit and return to Hong Kong on November 5.

World Stroke Day heightens public vigilance against stroke

The Department of Health (DH) today (October 29) urged members of the public to take positive steps and lead a healthy lifestyle to prevent stroke. This appeal was made in support of [World Stroke Day](#), held on October 29 every year, to increase awareness and drive action on stroke around the world.

"Stroke is a major cause of morbidity and death. Globally, over 12 million people have strokes each year. In Hong Kong, stroke was the fifth commonest cause of death with 3,057* registered deaths in 2022," a spokesman for the DH said.

According to an international study, up to 90 per cent of strokes worldwide were collectively attributed to 10 risk factors, including smoking, alcohol consumption, physical inactivity, unhealthy eating habits, psychosocial factors, abdominal obesity, hypertension, blood lipid disorder, diabetes and cardiac causes.

Locally, such modifiable risk factors of stroke are also common. The Thematic Household Survey conducted in 2021 reported that 9.5 per cent of persons aged 15 and above had a habit of daily cigarette smoking. The DH's Population Health Survey 2020-22 also observed that 8.7 per cent of persons aged 15 or above drank at least once a week. Regarding physical activity participation, 24.8 per cent of persons aged 18 or above performed an insufficient level of physical activities. Furthermore, 83.9 per cent of the population aged 15 to 84 had excessive salt intake; 54.6 per cent were overweight or obese by body mass index and 37.8 per cent were centrally obese by waist measurement; 29.5 per cent had hypertension; 8.5 per cent had diabetes; and 51.9 per cent had hypercholesterolaemia.

The spokesman advised that stroke risk can be reduced by adhering to a healthy lifestyle. Members of the public are advised to eat a balanced diet and limit the consumption of fat, salt and sugar; engage in at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity (such as brisk walking) or equivalent amounts of physical activity throughout the week; avoid smoking; and refrain from alcohol consumption.

The DH has been sparing no effort in increasing the population's participation in physical activity. In particular, the 10,000 Steps a Day campaign has been launched to encourage adults to gradually increase their daily step goal to 10 000 based on their own physical conditions, abilities, pace and individual circumstances. The campaign will enter its second phase this year, and a walking challenge with the slogan of "Walk Together for Health and Happiness" will be launched next month. For details, please refer to www.10000stepsaday.hk/?lang=en.

To further reduce the risk of having a stroke, the spokesman reminded members of the public to regularly check for "triple H" conditions (high blood pressure, high blood glucose and high blood lipids) with early intervention if indicated. Members of the public can consult doctors about the said screenings.

The DH will continue to step up efforts in increasing people's health literacy, enhancing public awareness about the importance of healthy living in stroke prevention, working in close partnership with other government bureaux and departments as well as community partners to build a health-enhancing environment.

For more information about the Government's initiatives and actions to prevent and control non-communicable diseases including stroke, please visit the thematic website at www.change4health.gov.hk/en/saptowards2025/.

*Provisional Figure