

## [FS witnesses Ng Teng Fong Charitable Foundation and Sino Group donate \\$200 million in support of AI development in Hong Kong \(with photos\)](#)

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, attended the donation ceremony of the Ng Teng Fong Charitable Foundation and Sino Group in support of AI development in Hong Kong today (March 10), witnessing the Ng Teng Fong Charitable Foundation and Sino Group donate \$200 million to the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) under the InnoHK research clusters to support the centre in establishing a service platform to provide Hong Kong citizens with the chatbot service "HKChat" based on the locally developed large language model HKGAI V1. During the ceremony, the Director of the Ng Teng Fong Charitable Foundation and Deputy Chairman of Sino Group, Mr Daryl Ng, presented the cheque to the Provost of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the Director of InnoHK HKGAI, Professor Guo Yike. The Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, and the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology, Mr Ivan Lee, attended and witnessed the donation ceremony.

Mr Chan expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Ng Teng Fong Charitable Foundation and Sino Group for their support. He said that currently, AI is undergoing rapid development, which is redefining the core competitiveness of economies and reshaping the medium- to long-term landscape of the global economy. During the third session of the 14th National People's Congress and the third session of the 14th Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee last week, Premier Li Qiang mentioned the need to continue advancing the "AI+" initiative in the Government Work Report, emphasising support for the extensive application of large-scale AI models, as well as the integration of digital technologies with our country's manufacturing and market strengths. By fostering closer collaboration among the Government and the industry, academia, research and investment sectors, accelerating the development of AI as a core industry of Hong Kong, the city can be developed into an international exchange and co-operation hub for the AI industry.

Mr Ng said, "We are pleased to foster the holistic development of the I&T (innovation and technology) ecosystem while supporting the Government's goal of attracting and encouraging more international talent to Hong Kong. It is an honour to contribute to this significant milestone for AI development in Hong Kong, facilitating locally developed AI platforms to be accessible to both industry and the public. We are thankful for the opportunity to support the development of a more inclusive AI future that will benefit the lives of the people of Hong Kong."

Professor Guo stated, "This generous donation will provide tremendous momentum to our research and development efforts. While expressing our

profound gratitude, we are deeply aware of the expectations from Hong Kong society and the responsibilities that lie on our shoulders. Having recently launched our new model HKGAI V1, we are currently fully engaged in developing and optimising this model as well as a series of applications. In particular, we are developing the 'HKChat', a locally developed AI chatbot service to be used by Hong Kong citizens. This donation has provided crucial support for this endeavour. We will strive to ensure our work meets and exceeds expectations."

InnoHK is a major I&T initiative of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government which aims to foster global research collaboration, comprising Health@InnoHK, which focuses on healthcare technologies, and AIR@InnoHK, which focuses on artificial intelligence and robotics technologies, with a total of 30 research centres established. InnoHK has successfully formed collaborations with more than 30 world-renowned universities and research institutes, including the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Peking University, Harvard University, Stanford University, the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, etc. The collaborating non-local universities and research institutions are from 12 different economies, pooling together about 2 500 researchers locally and from all over the world.

The HKGAI is one of the 30 research centres under InnoHK. Its goal is to establish Hong Kong's own AI foundational models and ecosystem. The HKGAI is developing a series of open-source foundational models to create technologies applicable to text and image generation, medical diagnosis, legal affairs and other applications. Furthermore, the centre will develop "HKChat", an AI chatbot that integrates local data, knowledge bases, and language requirements, supporting Cantonese, English, and Putonghua.



## [SCED visits Guangzhou and Dongguan \(with photos\)](#)

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, arrived in Guangzhou this morning (March 10) to begin his two-day visit.

Mr Yau first called on the Director General of the Department of Commerce of Guangdong Province, Mr Zhang Jinsong, to exchange views on deepening economic and trade co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong, including attracting businesses and investments, with a view to assisting Guangdong enterprises to go global while bringing in foreign enterprises and investments via Hong Kong's two-way platform, thereby jointly promoting the high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

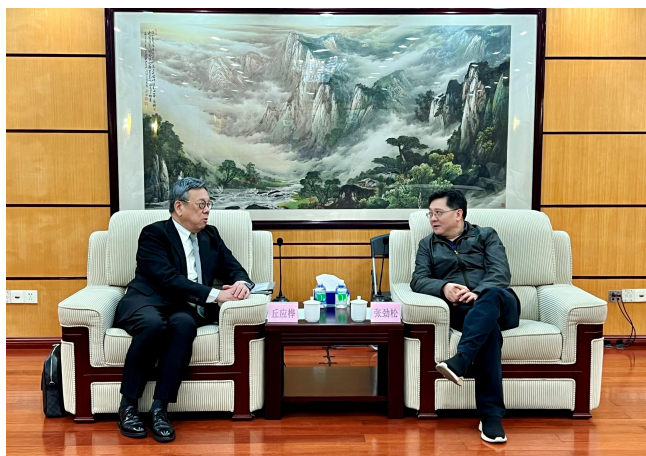
Mr Yau then attended a forum on innovation development and the award presentation ceremony of the Gold Pilot Award 2024 organised by the Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce in Guangdong and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC).

Addressing the event, Mr Yau said that reform and innovation are key directions for the development of enterprises, which are conducive to exploring new growth areas and opening new markets. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government will strive to fully utilise Hong Kong's bridging role between the Mainland and the world in developing Hong Kong into a multinational supply chain management centre to attract more Mainland enterprises to establish a foothold in the city and set up international or regional headquarters for managing offshore trading and supply chain.

He pointed out that the Mainland has become the world's largest e-commerce market amid the rapid growth of e-commerce businesses worldwide in recent years, adding that the HKSAR Government has launched E-commerce Easy to provide funding support to enterprises for implementing e-commerce projects to tap into the Mainland domestic market. Meanwhile, the HKTDC will continue to organise the Hong Kong Shopping Festival on Mainland e-commerce platforms in August this year to enhance brand awareness of Hong Kong products and drive sales.

Mr Yau also encouraged Hong Kong businessmen in Guangdong Province to actively participate in innovation and entrepreneurship on the Mainland to contribute to national development. He said that the latest Agreement Concerning Amendment to the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement Agreement on Trade in Services came into effect on March 1, making it easier for Hong Kong enterprises and professionals to access to the Mainland market.

Mr Yau will proceed to Dongguan tomorrow (March 11) to continue his visit.



## [DH announces latest situation of Legionnaires' disease cases, with more people who joined package tours to Qingyuan and Foshan last month infected](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (March 10) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and continued to urge those who participated in the package tours organised by the Sino Step Travel Services to Qingyuan and Foshan between February 20 and 28 to contact the CHP as soon as possible for a health assessment and medical surveillance.

From March 2 to 8, the CHP recorded eight imported and two community-acquired LD cases.

All eight imported cases participated in package tours organised by the Sino Step Travel Services to Qingyuan and Foshan last month. Six of the cases had been announced on [March 5](#) and [March 7](#) respectively. The two most recent

cases involve a 78-year-old male and a 66-year-old male who travelled on the package tours from February 20 to 22 and February 21 to 23 respectively.

The CHP has been investigating and following up on the cases since receiving notification of the first case. The CHP has proactively contacted the participants of the same tour group that included the first infected person, as well as two other groups with the same itinerary and hotel accommodation, to provide assessments and medical surveillance, and has discovered the two new cases. Investigations revealed that the eight cases had no common local exposure history. Six of them participated in the package tour to Qingyuan and Foshan that departed on February 20, and two participated in the same tour that departed on February 21. Similar to the five [imported cases](#) recorded in November last year involving two package tours to Foshan, they stayed at the Mehood Hotel in Foshan during the trip (address: 16 Hongling 1 Road, Shishan Town, Nanhai, Foshan).

The CHP has notified the health authorities of Guangdong about the above cases for environmental investigations. The CHP's epidemiological investigations are still in progress.

The CHP has also notified the Travel Industry Authority to alert the travel industry about the situation. The CHP once again urges those who joined the following three package tours to call the hotline (Tel: 2125 2670) as soon as possible:

Travel agent: Sino Step Travel Services

Travel dates: February 20 to 22;  
February 21 to 23; and  
February 26 to 28

Tour code: LB3280

Destinations: Qingyuan and Foshan

The hotline, which was launched on March 6, will be in operation until Friday (March 14) from 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday. People who have joined the aforesaid package tours should seek medical advice immediately if they have a fever or feel unwell.

Regarding the two community-acquired LD cases, details are as follow:

1. A male patient, aged 61 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Southern District; and
2. A male patient, aged 94 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Wan Chai District.

The CHP is conducting epidemiological investigations on the above two community-acquired cases to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any.

As of March 8, 31 LD cases had been recorded this year. In 2024 and

2023, there were 135 and 121 LD cases respectively.

Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus that support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh-water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not

distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2 µm filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and

- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:

1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

â€‹â€‹The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

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## [Fourth-term Human Resources Planning Commission convenes first meeting \(with photo\)](#)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, today (March 10) chaired the first meeting of the fourth-term Human Resources Planning Commission (HRPC).

At the meeting, the Office of the Government Economist reported to members Hong Kong's latest economic performance and labour market situation. Members took note that Hong Kong's economy progressed steadily last year amid a complicated and changing external environment, recording a moderate growth of 2.5 per cent. The labour market remained tight, with the latest unemployment rate staying low at 3.1 per cent. Looking ahead, the Hong Kong economy is expected to register further growth of 2 to 3 per cent in 2025 despite a challenging external environment.

Members were also briefed on the 2024 highlights and 2025 plans of Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE). HKTE provides comprehensive one-stop support to incoming talent, and promotes Hong Kong's advantages and attracts talent globally. HKTE organised the inaugural Global Talent Summit · Hong Kong (GTS) in May last year, which successfully promoted Hong Kong's dual role as an international talent hub and the country's gateway for talent to the international community, and at the same time strengthened regional talent

exchanges and co-operation. To reinforce Hong Kong's status as an international hub for high-calibre talent, HKTE will organise the second GTS early next year. At the meeting today, members exchanged views on HKTE's work strategy for attracting talent and promoting Hong Kong.

Members were also briefed by the Labour and Welfare Bureau on the outcomes of the latest round of the Talent List update. With the addition of nine new professions, the updated Talent List covers 60 professions with local talent shortages, and would help attract top talent and professionals required for the development of industries related to the "eight centres" with a view to generating new impetus for their growth. Members were pleased to note that the HRPC's views as well as those from various local business chambers and industry organisations have been taken on board during the process. They also discussed ways to strengthen external promotion of the Talent List.

Mr Chan said, "The HRPC is an important policy platform for members from various professional backgrounds to exchange views with the relevant policy bureaux on strategies and measures to develop human resources and enhance the quality of manpower. I look forward to working closely with members in the future to assist the Special Administrative Region Government's work in building a vibrant economy and striving for development, ensuring effective human resources planning to promote diversified development of Hong Kong's economy."



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**[Fraudulent websites and internet banking login screens related to Industrial and Commercial Bank of](#)**

# China (Asia) Limited

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited relating to fraudulent websites and internet banking login screens, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the websites or login screens concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.