

15th National Games Triathlon Test Event to be held on March 1 and 2

The 15th National Games Triathlon Test Event will be held at the Central Harbourfront and Victoria Harbour on March 1 and 2.

A total of around 110 athletes from the Mainland, Hong Kong, and Macao will compete in the men's individual, women's individual, and mixed relay events. The women's individual and men's individual races are scheduled for 8am and 10.30am respectively on March 1, while the mixed relay race will take place at 2pm on March 2. The starting point of the races will be located at the waterfront of the Wan Chai Temporary Promenade. Athletes will first complete the swimming segment, followed by the cycling segment, and finally the running segment. The cycling route will pass by Golden Bauhinia Square, and the running route will mainly loop around the Central Harbourfront Promenade, passing by several iconic Hong Kong landmarks, with the finish line located at the Central Harbourfront Event Space.

Individual athletes will complete a 0.75km swim, a 20km bike ride and a 5km run. For mixed relay race, a team is composed of four athletes (two men and two women), and each athlete needs to complete a 0.3km swim, an 8km bike ride and a 1.8km run.

To prepare for and facilitate the test event, from February 26 to March 2, special traffic and transport arrangements will be implemented in phases on the following road sections in Central and Wan Chai districts.

1. Road closures

(i) From 10am on February 26 to 6pm on March 2, the section of Expo Drive between Legislative Council Road and Expo Drive Central will be temporarily closed;

(ii) From 5am to 8am on February 28, intermittent road closures will be implemented by the Police in the vicinities of Central Harbourfront and Wan Chai North (including Lung Wo Road, Yiu Sing Street, Lung Hop Street, Expo Drive, Expo Drive Central, and Expo Drive East); and

(iii) From 2am to 2pm on March 1 and from 8am to 6pm on March 2, road closure measures will be implemented in the road sections mentioned in (ii) above. Affected motorists should divert via Fleming Road, Connaught Road Central, Harcourt Road or Gloucester Road as appropriate.

2. Public transport arrangements

During the road closure measures being implemented from 2am to 2pm on March 1 and from 8 am to 6 pm on March 2, four bus routes traversing the affected road sections will be subject to temporary diversions via Fleming Road (cross-harbour bus route nos. 104 and 961) or Connaught Road Central (Citybus route nos. H1 and H2). At the same time, the terminal point of

cross-harbour bus route no. 961 at Expo Drive East will be temporarily relocated to Harbour Road outside Wan Chai Swimming Pool, and the bus stop of Citybus route no. H1 at Expo Drive East near Golden Bauhinia Square will also be temporarily suspended.

Members of the public are advised to make use of public transport services as far as possible to avoid traffic congestion and unnecessary delays. During the event, the Transport Department (TD) and the Police will closely monitor the traffic situation. The Police may adjust the traffic arrangements subject to the prevailing crowd and traffic conditions in the areas. Members of the public should pay attention to the latest traffic news through radio, television or the "HKeMobility" mobile application.

For details of the special traffic and transport arrangements for the triathlon test event, members of the public may refer to the TD's relevant notice (www.td.gov.hk/filemanager/en/content_13/TDN%20-Triathlon%20Test%20Event%20-%20eng%20v3.pdf), its mobile application "HKeMobility", passenger notices issued by the relevant public transport operators, and the press release on the special traffic arrangements for the test event issued by the Police (www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202502/24/P2025022400395.htm).

A spokesperson for the National Games Coordination Office (Hong Kong) said, "The test event will be organised in accordance with the requirements of the National Games and will differ from previous international competitions held in Hong Kong in terms of the competition events, routes and difficulty. This test event will also mark the first time the Central Harbourfront Event Space is being used as the finish line, with the race route passing through a number of iconic landmarks in Hong Kong, showcasing the city's beauty and unique characteristics to the entire nation. Members of the public and travellers are advised to take note of the special traffic arrangements during the test event and plan their journeys in advance."

For more information on the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games in Hong Kong, please visit the thematic website (www.2025nationalgames.gov.hk/en/index.html), as well as the Facebook page (www.facebook.com/2025nationalgames.hk) and Instagram page (www.instagram.com/2025nationalgames.hk).

Financial Secretary to present Budget

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

The Legislative Council (LegCo) will hold a meeting on February 26 (Wednesday) at 11am in the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. The Appropriation Bill 2025 will be introduced into the Council for the First Reading and the

Second Reading. When moving the Second Reading of the Bill, the Financial Secretary will outline the 2025-2026 Budget. The Second Reading debate on the Bill will be adjourned.

During the meeting, Members will also ask the Government 22 questions on various policy areas, all of which require written replies.

The agenda of the above meeting can be obtained via the LegCo Website (www.legco.gov.hk). Members of the public can watch or listen to the meeting via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meeting at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.

[SFST's keynote speech at MPF Symposium \(English only\)](#)

Following is the keynote speech by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, at the MPF Symposium on "Green Finance and Sustainable Investing" today (February 24):

Ayesha (Chairman of the Mandatory Provident Fund Authority (MPFA), Mrs Ayesha Macpherson Lau), YC (Managing Director of the MPFA, Mr Cheng Yan-chee), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It is both an honour and a privilege to address you today at the MPF Symposium on "Green Finance and Sustainable Investing". I extend my gratitude to the Mandatory Provident Fund Authority for convening this important gathering, bringing together industry leaders, esteemed professionals, and dedicated stakeholders. We stand at a pivotal moment, united by a shared purpose: to explore how finance can serve not only as a cornerstone for retirement protection, but also as a transformative force for the future of our planet.

In recent years, the global community has awakened to the profound urgency of climate change – a challenge that transcends borders and generations. The rising tide of extreme weather events and their far-reaching socio-economic consequences compel us to act with resolve and foresight. As an international financial centre of dynamism, Hong Kong is poised to lead this charge, harnessing the power of capital to propel the world towards a low-carbon future.

The Government has made an unwavering commitment to achieve carbon neutrality before 2050 and to halve Hong Kong's carbon emissions by 2035. These are not mere aspirations but a call to action. Through a sustained series of initiatives, we have fortified our resolve to advance green and

sustainable finance – efforts that have not only accelerated Hong Kong's emergence as a preeminent hub for sustainable investment, but also underscored our pivotal role in the global transition to a greener economy.

Hong Kong: Asia's vanguard in green finance

The financial sector has emerged as a formidable conduit to direct global capital toward sustainable ends. Hong Kong, with its stature as Asia's premier international financial centre and a beacon of sustainable finance, stands uniquely equipped to spearhead this transformation. Our capital markets have set a gold standard in green and sustainable finance, offering a rich tapestry of investment opportunities that resonate with two "Ps", both "purpose" and "profit".

As of December last year, the Securities and Futures Commission has authorised over 220 ESG (environmental, social, and governance) funds, managing assets valued at approximately HK\$1.2 trillion – a testament to the vibrancy of our market. Between 2021 and 2023, Hong Kong consistently led the region in arranging green and sustainable bonds. In 2023 alone, the total issuance of green and sustainable debt surpassed US\$50 billion, with green and sustainable bonds accounting for US\$30 billion, or 37 per cent of the regional total. These figures are not just statistics; they reflect the magnetic appeal and robust capacity of our markets to finance projects that safeguard our planet.

The Government has been a steadfast champion of this cause. Since launching the Government Green Bond Programme in 2019, we have issued green bonds equivalent to HK\$220 billion, channeling vital resources into sustainable infrastructure and innovation.

Pioneering progress through innovation and partnership

Our commitment to green and sustainable finance is not static; it is a dynamic pursuit propelled by innovation and collaboration. In 2021, we introduced the Green and Sustainable Finance Grant Scheme, a forward-thinking initiative that subsidises bond issuers and loan borrowers for expenses related to issuance and external reviews. By lowering financial barriers, this scheme empowers businesses to embrace sustainable financing, amplifying their contributions to a greener tomorrow.

With sustainable development gaining heightened worldwide awareness, it has become vital to ensure that investors and other market participants have accurate, consistent and relevant information about sustainability-related matters for managing risks and supporting investments. We therefore published in March last year a vision statement to set out the vision and approach of the Government and financial regulators in developing a comprehensive ecosystem for sustainability disclosure in Hong Kong. We then launched in December last year a roadmap on sustainability disclosure in Hong Kong, setting out Hong Kong's approach to require publicly accountable entities (PAEs) to adopt the ISSB Standards (International Financial Reporting Standards–Sustainability Disclosure Standards). It provides a well-defined

pathway for large PAEs to fully adopt the ISSB Standards no later than 2028.

Also, we are cultivating a thriving green fintech ecosystem to position Hong Kong as a global leader in this frontier. To better integrate fintech with green finance, and accelerate the green transformation of the economy, we will actively expand the green fintech ecosystem and develop Hong Kong as a green fintech hub. We launched in March last year the Prototype Hong Kong Green Fintech Map, which is developed together with relevant stakeholders, to provide one-stop information on the current status of green fintech companies operating in Hong Kong and related services, with a view to raising the companies' profile. We are now developing the official Hong Kong Green Fintech Map with the industry, which will be published in the first half of this year.

The resilience of the MPF System

Now let's turn our attention to reflect on the performance of our MPF System. Under the leadership of Ayesha, the system delivered last year an average annual net return of 8.6 per cent, culminating in a total net asset value approaching HK\$1.3 trillion at the year end. This achievement underscores the resilience and adaptability of our system – qualities that have defined the MPF System over its two-decade legacy.

Since its inception in 2000, the Equity Fund and Mixed Assets Fund, comprising nearly 80 per cent of total MPF assets, have posted average annualised net returns of 4.3 per cent and 4.0 per cent respectively, outpacing inflation over the same period. These results affirm the system's capacity to weather economic cycles and also deliver enduring value to scheme members. Looking ahead, the MPF System remains a bedrock of retirement security, empowering members of the public to pursue their financial aspirations with more confidence and stability post-retirement.

MPF's leadership in sustainable investing

Climate change and socio-economic shifts present unprecedented challenges – and opportunities – that demand we wield finance as a force for good. This convergence of prosperity and purpose is not optional; it is imperative.

The MPFA has been a champion in this domain, embedding sustainable investing in its mission and guidance for the industry. While we celebrate last year's strong performance, we recognise that the work of enhancing the MPF System is perpetual. A critical focus has been mitigating environmental, social, and governance risks – risks to which pension funds, with their decades-long horizons, are acutely exposed.

In 2021, the MPFA issued the Principles for Adopting Sustainable Investing in the Investment and Risk Management Processes of MPF Funds. This framework has guided trustees in integrating ESG considerations into their investment and risk management strategies and disclosing these efforts to scheme members. Trustees now report their sustainable investing progress in

annual governance reports, fostering transparency that empowers members to align their investments with their values.

Beyond disclosure, we are diversifying MPF portfolios by integrating sustainable instruments – vehicles that not only finance ESG initiatives but also enhance risk-adjusted returns. We have established a pioneering mechanism to prioritise the allocation of institutional green bonds to Mandatory Provident Fund schemes. As of September last year, MPF funds invested HK\$600 million in Government green bonds, representing a 50 per cent increase before the arrangement was put in place. This dual-purpose initiative advances our environmental agenda while bolstering the long-term sustainability of our pension system, a synergy of social responsibility and ecological stewardship.

A call to collective action

Our dialogue today must transcend this symposium, igniting enduring change in our communities and the MPF ecosystem. Hong Kong will continue to innovate, expand, and diversify, forging a vibrant ecosystem that serves both local, regional and global investors. Your wisdom and contributions are indispensable as we elevate this market and cement Hong Kong's legacy as a global leader in green finance and retirement protection.

Thank you.

[Import of poultry meat and products from Mid Ulster District of Northern Ireland in UK suspended](#)

â€‹The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (February 24) that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) about an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in the Mid Ulster District of Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom (UK), the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the area with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 910 tonnes of chilled and frozen poultry meat, and about 1.34 million poultry eggs from the UK last year.

"The CFS has contacted the British authority over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the WOAH and the relevant authorities

on the avian influenza outbreak. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

Phishing instant messages 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 phishing instant messages, 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 instant messages 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.