

# Speech by SCED at HKGCC Chinese New Year Dinner 2025 (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, at the HKGCC Chinese New Year Dinner 2025 today (February 13):

Agnes (Chairman of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, Ms Agnes Chan), Commissioner Pan Yundong (Deputy Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)), Deputy Director-General Zhou Qiang (Deputy Director-General of the Economic Affairs Department and Head of the Commercial Office of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government (LOCPG) in the HKSAR), Deputy Director-General Xu Xiaolin (Deputy Director-General of the Coordination Department of the LOCPG in the HKSAR), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. It gives me great pleasure to join you all tonight. This festive occasion gives us a time to reflect on the past year and look forward with hope to the new one.

In 2024, Hong Kong demonstrated to the world our resilience in times of uncertainties. Our city is ranked as the world's third-largest financial centre, the world's freest economy, and is at the fifth place in the global competitiveness ranking. We now have nearly 10 000 companies from the Mainland and overseas, as well as 4 700 start-ups. Both numbers are the highest that we have ever seen. These are signs of confidence in Hong Kong's status as a prime business destination.

But challenges will keep coming. In addition to conflicts in Europe and the Middle East, we also need to brace the rapid changes in the operating environment. The United States (US)' imposition of tariffs will affect many economies and companies. On this, the HKSAR Government strongly disapproves. It rattles the fundamentals of a rule-based multilateral trade system, which took the whole world decades to build. As far as the tariffs on Hong Kong are concerned, we have decided to file a complaint to the World Trade Organization. We have always been a staunch supporter of free trade, and we will continue to hold tight to our beliefs.

Risk management is key to a successful business. I am sure many of you saw the uncertainties coming from years ago. I was told that a lot of companies have already modified their business plans, the supply chains, asset distributions, etc, in anticipation of the changing external environment. I encourage you to continue to do the same.

For Hong Kong, this term of Government attaches a lot of importance to exploring new markets. The US and Europe are traditionally among our largest trading partners, and they will probably continue to be so. We are happy with

the businesses that we do with each other, which are mutually beneficial. But more importantly, we must not lose sight of the business potential in other markets. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), for example, if taken as a bloc, is now Hong Kong's second-largest trading partners. Other emerging regions, such as the Middle East, are also catching up fast.

In the past two years or so, we have led business delegations to ASEAN and the Middle East. We will continue to do so in the coming year. We will also step up our efforts to forge new trade and investment agreements with rising trading partners. Increasing our trade and investment with new markets will inject new impetus into Hong Kong's economy. It will also help us mitigate the risks arising from geopolitics.

Looking closer to home, we spare no efforts to drive changes to our economic structure. The Government sees the need to develop silver economy. The growing elderly population in Hong Kong is becoming an important consumer group, creating considerable demand for such products and services as medical and healthcare, leisure and recreation, and home and personal care catered for the elderly. These products and services also enhance the quality of life for the elderly of Hong Kong, which is equally important for us.

We also encourage Hong Kong companies to embrace electronic commerce (e-commerce). This is a global trend in consumption pattern that is irreversible. To help our small and medium enterprises to upgrade their business models, we launched the "E-commerce Easy" under the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales last year to provide funding support. The Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the HKTDC, also organised the first Hong Kong Shopping Festival to showcase consumer products and brands on Mainland e-commerce platforms. The Festival was a huge success. We will organise the second edition this year. The HKTDC will also step up efforts in providing advisory support to enterprises in need when exploring the e-commerce market.

I spent all my life in Hong Kong. In my entire career, I witnessed Hong Kong going through ups and downs. The world today is so different than the world I was in when I was in my twenties. One of Hong Kong's biggest appeal is the "can-do" spirit of Hong Kong people. We are flexible, adaptive, determined, forward-looking, and we fight hard. We will rise above the challenges and come out on top.

I would like to thank the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce for all the good you do to our business community. As we enter the Year of the Snake, let us draw inspiration from its attributes of versatility, intelligence and agility, and work together to build a better future for Hong Kong. I wish you all a year with good health, success and happiness. Thank you.

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## SFST Leads delegation to Qianhai in Shenzhen for second meeting of Shenzhen-Hong Kong Financial Co-operation Committee (with photos)

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, led a delegation to attend the second meeting of the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Financial Co-operation Committee (Committee) in Qianhai, Shenzhen, today (February 13). The meeting echoed the aspirations expressed by the Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Work Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, Mr Xia Baolong, during the discussion session he hosted on Sunday (February 9) for more reciprocal co-operation and collaborative development within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

The meeting was co-chaired by Mr Hui and the Vice-Mayor of the Shenzhen Municipal People's Government and Director General of the Office of the Financial Affairs Committee of the CPC Shenzhen Municipal Committee, Mr Luo Huanghao. The Committee discussed the latest developments of the financial markets and financial co-operation initiatives of Shenzhen and Hong Kong. It also explored suggestions on further enhancing the development of a collaborative market.

On collaborations in terms of financial professional services and talent, Mr Hui announced a list of Hong Kong accounting firms capable of supporting Mainland enterprises in "going global", and expressed his hope that Hong Kong's high-quality and international professional services could facilitate the high-level opening of the country's financial markets. The Committee also arranged an experience-sharing session by two Hong Kong students who participated in the GBA Fintech Two-way Internship Scheme for Post-secondary Students to encourage the industry to provide more opportunities for young people from Shenzhen and Hong Kong to foster talent exchanges in the financial realm.

Mr Hui said that Hong Kong and Shenzhen were both core cities and key engines for driving the development of the GBA. It is anticipated that Hong Kong will continue its close collaboration with Shenzhen for co-ordinated development. As Mr Hui said at the discussion session hosted by Director Xia, the further strengthening of co-operation between Hong Kong and the GBA in the areas of financial markets and services would better reinforce national development strategies, thereby contributing to the nation's development into a financial powerhouse and creating more development opportunities for Hong Kong and the GBA.

Mr Luo said, "The Shenzhen-Hong Kong Financial Co-operation Committee is an important platform for implementing the 'one country, two systems'

principle and reinforcing Hong Kong's status as an international financial centre. Moving forward, favourable policies and connectivity of the financial infrastructure will act as key pillars and help provide breakthroughs for the continuous enhancement to the connectivity of Shenzhen-Hong Kong financial infrastructure. We will work in co-ordination with Hong Kong in providing financial services for enterprises to "go global", supporting the efficient flow of capital, credit and data across the boundary."

Established in June 2024, the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Financial Co-operation Committee brings together official members from the Central Authorities, Shenzhen and Hong Kong, as well as industry leaders in both places as non-official members to provide insights on Shenzhen-Hong Kong financial co-operation and the development of the GBA's financial infrastructure. The first meeting was held in mid-June last year in Hong Kong.



# Special traffic arrangements for 15th National Games athletics (marathon) test event

Police will implement special traffic arrangements to facilitate the 2025 Shenzhen-Hong Kong marathon and the 15th National Games athletics (marathon) test event to be held on February 23 (Sunday).

## Shenzhen Bay Port

To ensure the smooth running of the race, clearance services at Shenzhen Bay Port will be suspended, and temporary control measures will be implemented at Shenzhen Bay Bridge, Kong Sham Western Highway and Ha Tsuen Interchange from 2am to about 11am. These will be closed to all traffic from eastbound and westbound Yuen Long Highway, and Ha Tsuen Road.

During the suspension of clearance services, cross-boundary goods vehicles and private cars holding valid permits for the Shenzhen Bay Port may divert to Lok Ma Chau/Huanggang Port, Man Kam To Port and Heung Yuen Wai Port as instructed. Traffic is expected to be relatively busy for roads leading to Lok Ma Chau/Huanggang Port and Lok Ma Chau Station (Futian Port), including San Tin Interchange, San Sam Road and Lok Ma Chau Road.

Clearance services at Shenzhen Bay Port are anticipated to resume at around 11am, at which time traffic is expected to be relatively busy. Travellers and drivers planning to use the port on that day are advised to plan their journeys ahead and reserve sufficient commuting time.

## Shenzhen Bay Boundary Control Point

After the clearance services at Shenzhen Bay Port resume normal, the following arrangements will be implemented by phases depending on traffic conditions:

### Phase I

All vehicles will use the existing driving routes to enter the boundary control point.

### Phase II

- The traffic arrangements for goods vehicles remain unchanged. They will continue to enter the holding area awaiting clearance through the goods vehicle lanes;
- Public transport vehicles, including cross-boundary buses, franchised

buses, green minibuses and taxis will continue to enter the boundary control point through the passenger vehicle lanes; and

- Cross-boundary private cars must keep left on the Shenzhen Bay Bridge and then enter the designated waiting area through the goods vehicle lanes. Private cars will queue up and await further instructions to proceed to the clearance area for departure procedures.

### Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point

Depending on traffic conditions, the following arrangements will be implemented by phases:

#### Phase I

All vehicles will use the existing driving routes to enter the boundary control point.

#### Phase II

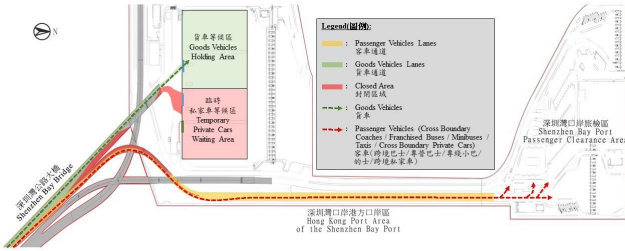
- The traffic arrangements for cross-boundary private cars and goods vehicles remain unchanged. They will enter the boundary control point through the passenger vehicle lanes via San Tin Interchange or the goods vehicle lanes respectively;
- Public transport vehicles including cross-boundary buses, green minibuses and taxis will use the goods vehicle lanes on eastbound San Tin Highway or westbound Fanling Highway to enter the goods vehicle holding area via San Sham Road;
- Lok Ma Chau – Huanggang cross-boundary shuttle buses will enter Castle Peak Road after leaving Lok Ma Chau Public Transport Interchange, and will be instructed to turn right to the goods vehicle lanes of San Sham Road to enter the goods vehicle holding area; and
- Vehicles in the goods vehicle holding area will be instructed to proceed to their respective drop-off areas.

#### Phase III

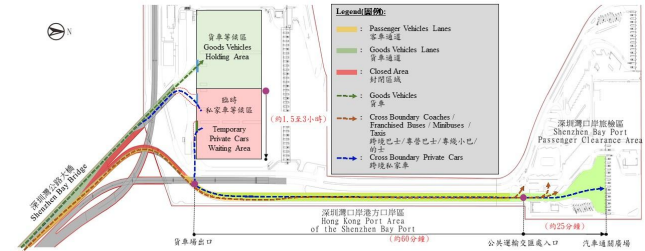
- In addition to the traffic arrangements implemented in Phase II, cross-boundary private cars will be instructed to enter the designated waiting area; and
- Vehicles in the designated waiting area will be instructed to proceed to the clearance area for departure procedures.

Motorists are advised to avoid driving to above areas during the specified hours. Road users are advised to exercise patience and drive with care, and follow the instructions of the Police on site.

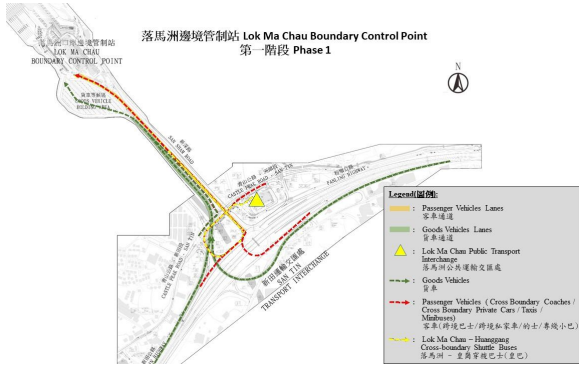
深圳灣邊境管制站 Shenzhen Bay Boundary Control Point  
第一階段 Phase 1



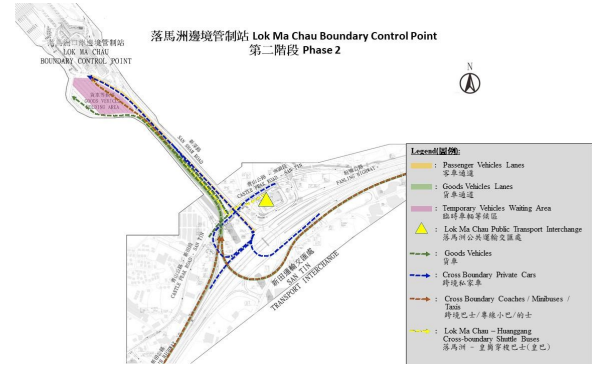
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第二階段 Phase 2



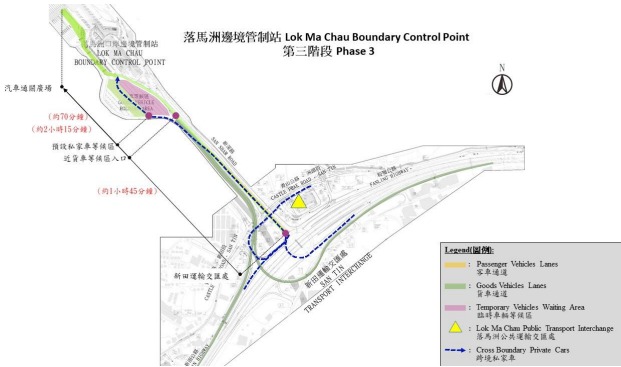
落馬洲邊境管制站 Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point  
第一階段 Phase 1



落馬洲邊境管制站 Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point  
第二階段 Phase 2



落馬洲邊境管制站 Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point  
第三階段 Phase 3



# Government and 28 large corporates jointly launch new round of HYAB Scheme on Corporate Summer Internship on the Mainland and Overseas

△€<The Government today (February 13) announced the launch of the HYAB Scheme on Corporate Summer Internship on the Mainland and Overseas 2025 in collaboration with 28 large corporates, providing young people of Hong Kong with quality summer internship placements on the Mainland and overseas to jointly promote youth development.

In the 2024 Policy Address, the Chief Executive emphasised that the Government would sustain its efforts in strengthening support for youth development. This includes continuing to implement various exchange and

internship programmes on the Mainland and overseas to encourage young people to gain a deeper understanding of national development and global development trends. In this regard, the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau forged partnerships with large corporates to launch the HYAB Scheme on Corporate Summer Internship on the Mainland and Overseas to provide internship placements at the corporates' Mainland and overseas operations, with the aim of cultivating a cohort of young talent with a good understanding of the country's development and a global perspective. The Scheme provides young people with exposure to the work culture in large corporates in different parts of the world, and an opportunity to establish interpersonal networks outside Hong Kong, enabling them to seize national development opportunities.

The number of companies participating in the new round of the Scheme has increased to 28, and internship placements are offered in multiple Mainland provinces and cities, including various Mainland cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and Hangzhou, as well as overseas countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Australia. The internship placements cover different industries, such as financial services, innovation and technology, logistics, property development, construction, retail, hospitality, entertainment and utilities (please refer to Annex for details of the internship placements). Applicants should be (i) a full time post-secondary student (including sub-degree, undergraduate, or postgraduate) holding a Hong Kong permanent identity card; or (ii) a local full-time post-secondary student (including sub-degree, undergraduate, or postgraduate) holding a Hong Kong identity card. The internship will take place between June and September this year. Participating companies will sponsor the interns for major expenses including transportation and accommodation costs, and assign dedicated personnel to provide training and support to the interns.

Details of the Scheme and internship placements are available on the dedicated webpage ([www.ydc.gov.hk/scsi/en](http://www.ydc.gov.hk/scsi/en)). Interested young people should submit their applications through the centralised application platform on the dedicated webpage on or before March 10. Each person can apply for up to three companies in one application. Upon receiving the applications, participating companies will contact suitable applicants directly for the assessment and selection process, and make placement arrangements for selected interns.

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## **Monthly gravidtrap index for *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes of January remains at lowest level**

â€‹The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (February

13) announced that the monthly gravidtrap index for *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes in January dropped further, to 0.2 per cent from 0.7 per cent in December last year. The index in January remained at the lowest Level 1, indicating that the distribution of *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes in the areas surveyed was not extensive.

In January, all 64 survey areas were recorded with a gravidtrap index lower than the alert level of 20 per cent. Moreover, the monthly density index for *Aedes albopictus* in January was 1.2, which means that an average of 1.2 *Aedes albopictus* adults were found in the *Aedes*-positive gravidtraps, indicating that the number of adult *Aedes albopictus* was not abundant in the survey areas. The gravidtrap and density indices for *Aedes albopictus* in different survey areas as well as information on mosquito prevention and control measures are available on the department website at [www.fehd.gov.hk](http://www.fehd.gov.hk).

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "The FEHD has continued to intensify mosquito prevention and control work with relevant government departments in areas under their purview, including eliminating mosquito breeding places, applying larvicides, conducting fogging operations to eradicate adult mosquitoes, and placing mosquito trapping devices at suitable locations. The FEHD has also provided government departments with professional advice and technical support to assist them in swiftly formulating and implementing effective anti-mosquito measures while strengthening publicity and education at the same time. Under the concerted efforts and collaboration of various parties, the index in January remained at the lowest level. Although the index remains at a low level, the warm and humid weather of spring is favourable for mosquito breeding. The FEHD will continue to monitor the mosquito infestation in all districts, and will conduct prompt and effective mosquito prevention and control work. Members of the public are reminded to continue the routine mosquito prevention and control work, especially the repair and maintenance of structures. Cracks and dents which may accumulate water and become potential breeding grounds should be filled and levelled to reduce the chance of mosquito breeding when the rainy season approaches."

The FEHD will conduct a three-phase Anti-mosquito Campaign this year. The first phase of the territory-wide campaign will be launched on February 17 and will run until March 14. During the period, the district offices of the FEHD will target areas that have drawn particular concern, such as public markets, cooked food centres and hawker bazaars, single-block buildings, streets and back lanes, common parts of buildings, village houses, construction sites, vacant sites and road works sites, to remove accumulated water and carry out mosquito prevention and control work.

The FEHD appeals to members of the public to continue to stay alert and work together to carry out mosquito prevention and control measures early, including inspecting their homes and surroundings to remove potential breeding grounds, changing water in vases and scrubbing their inner surfaces, removing water in saucers under potted plants at least once a week, properly disposing of containers such as soft drink cans and lunch boxes, and drilling large holes in unused tyres. The FEHD also advises members of the public and estate management bodies to keep drains free of blockage and level all defective ground surfaces to prevent the accumulation of water. They should

also scrub all drains and surface sewers with an alkaline detergent at least once a week to remove any mosquito eggs.

*Aedes albopictus* is a kind of mosquito that can transmit dengue fever (DF). DF is commonly found in tropical and subtropical regions of the world, and has become endemic in many countries in Southeast Asia. In 2024, the World Health Organization recorded over 13 million DF cases, which was a record number. The dengue activity in neighbouring areas has remained high. Members of the public should stay vigilant and continue to carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures.