

Grants approved for flood victims in Bihar, India

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has accepted the advice of the Disaster Relief Fund Advisory Committee and approved from the Disaster Relief Fund two grants totalling \$9.607 million to two agencies for providing relief to flood victims in Bihar, India.

Announcing the grants today (November 28), a spokesman for the Government said that the flood had affected more than 2 million people in Bihar, India. The two grants – one of \$5.108 million to Habitat for Humanity Hong Kong and one of \$4.499 to Plan International Hong Kong – will be used to provide shelter kits, water kits and kitchen kits as well as household and hygiene items to benefit around 58 560 flood victims. As the targeted localities of the two relief agencies are different, there will be no overlapping of resources. The Committee hoped the grants would facilitate the provision of timely relief to the victims and help them restore their normal living. The grants, together with the one approved earlier for this flood in Bihar, India, will take the accumulative value of grants and number of beneficiaries to \$14.888 million and 123 560 respectively.

"To ensure that the money is used for the designated purposes, the relief agencies will be asked to submit evaluation reports and audited accounts on the use of the grants after the relief projects have been completed," the spokesman said.

SCED: Strong economic and trade partnership between Hong Kong and Thailand set to scale new heights (with photos)

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, continued his visit with a delegation comprising businessmen, professionals and start-up representatives in Bangkok, Thailand, today (November 28), during which he met with the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, Dr Somkid Jatusripitak, and delivered a keynote speech at a business seminar cum networking luncheon attended by about 300 local and Hong Kong business leaders.

The high-level meeting demonstrated the importance attached to the

bilateral relations by both sides. Leveraging the opportunities brought about by the Belt and Road Initiative, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the national development plans of Thailand, the longstanding and close relationship between Hong Kong and Thailand is set to scale new heights, Mr Yau said.

At the meeting with Dr Somkid, Mr Yau stressed that Hong Kong has always treasured Thailand as a valuable trading partner on its own and as an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member state. With the opening of the new Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Bangkok in February this year, it goes beyond doubt that the bilateral connection between the two places will only continue to expand and excel on all fronts.

At the business seminar cum networking luncheon jointly organised by the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and Invest Hong Kong, Mr Yau highlighted the various unparalleled advantages as an international financial centre with a rich pool of professionals benchmarked against international standards and practices.

He said the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), which is Hong Kong's free trade agreement with Mainland China, liberalises not only trade in goods, but also trade in services, investment, and economic and technical co-operation, offering great opportunities for companies in Hong Kong, including Thai companies that are based in the city, to enjoy facilitated access to the world's biggest emerging market.

He added that Hong Kong is particularly keen to assist its enterprises and professionals in reaching out to new markets and exploring investment opportunities, and that Thailand is certainly among the top of the city's list for further exploration. Hong Kong's enterprises and professionals all stand ready to share their experiences and look forward to partnering with Thai companies to capture the new possibilities and opportunities.

Mr Yau also mentioned that the parts relating to Thailand in the Free Trade Agreement and the Investment Agreement between Hong Kong and the ASEAN have come into force. He said that these agreements are all important in a time of huge economic uncertainties as they help provide the much needed certainty and clarity to businesses of both places and act as an important pillar in supporting further economic collaboration between Hong Kong and Thailand.

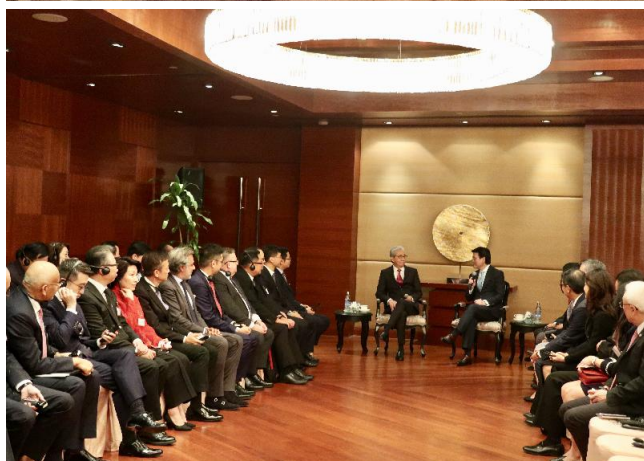
During the day, Mr Yau and the delegation also received a briefing provided by the representatives from the Thailand Board of Investment (an agency promoting inward and outward investment in Thailand) on business opportunities in Thailand and the Eastern Economic Corridor, a developing economic region which plays a key role in Thailand's economy. They also met with representatives of Italian-Thai Development Public Company Limited (the largest construction contractor in Thailand), Loxley Public Company Limited (a conglomerate with a wide range of businesses) and WHA Group (one of the largest integrated industrial estate operators), to learn about the latest infrastructure developments in Thailand and seek co-operation opportunities

with the companies.

Mr Yau and the delegation will attend a dinner hosted by the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Kingdom of Thailand, Mr Lyu Jian, in the evening.

The delegation will continue its visit programme in Bangkok tomorrow (November 29), where they will visit the Thai-Chinese Rayong Industrial Zone.

Mr Yau will return to Hong Kong tomorrow evening.



Snowflake brick sample detected with coliform bacteria exceeding legal limit

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (November 28) announced that a sample of milk-flavoured snowflake brick was found to contain coliform bacteria exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the incident.

"The Centre collected the abovementioned sample of snowflake brick from a licensed frozen confection factory in Kwai Chung for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained 480 coliform bacteria per gram, exceeding the legal limit," a spokesman for the CFS said.

Under the Frozen Confections Regulation (Cap 132AC), frozen confection for sale should not contain more than 100 coliform bacteria per gram. The maximum penalty for offenders is a fine of \$10,000 and three months' imprisonment upon conviction. The fact that the coliform bacteria exceeded the legal limit indicated that the hygienic conditions were unsatisfactory, but did not mean that consumption would lead to food poisoning.

"The CFS has informed the person in charge of the premises concerned of the irregularity and instructed it to stop selling the affected product immediately. The CFS will provide health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff concerned, and request them to carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfection. The CFS is also tracing the distribution of the affected product," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the case and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health.

CAS starts mountain search and rescue standards check and mountain casualty handling training (with photos)

The Mountain Search and Rescue (MSaR) Company of the Civil Aid Service (CAS) has been undergoing a standards check and mountain casualty handling training by MSaR experts from the United Kingdom for about two weeks since November 23. The checks and training aim to assess the search and rescue

techniques, the use of MSaR equipment as well as the operational proficiency and efficiency of the members of the MSaR Company to ensure a high standard of service by the Company.

The experts also inspected the personal MSaR technique, team rescue technique as well as MSaR operational procedures and effectiveness of the CAS MSaR personnel at Beacon Hill and Lei Yue Mun (Old Quarry, Sam Ka Tsuen) in Kowloon and Tsing Lung Tau in the New Territories during November 25 to 27. The experts considered that the technical performance of CAS MSaR personnel, including the use of new equipment for abseiling, stretcher lowering technique, cliff rescue and MSaR operational deployment reaches the professional standard.

The experts will also share their knowledge and experience on mountain casualty handling, MSaR training skills and the latest MSaR techniques with the CAS personnel. The checks and training will end on December 5.

The video of the MSaR standards checking has been uploaded to CAS Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CASinAction/?ref=page_internal).



[Hong Kong Immigration Department wins](#)

Regional Identity Document Awards of the Year of High Security Printing Asia 2019 (with photo)

The new Hong Kong Smart Identity Card and the Next Generation Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Electronic Passport (e-Passport) introduced by the Hong Kong Immigration Department (ImmD) have won Regional Identity (ID) Document of the Year 2019 of the High Security Printing Asia (HSPA) awards for the Best New ID card and the Best New e-Passport. The awards were presented during a ceremony on November 26 in Yokohama, Japan.

The Regional ID Document Awards aim to promote the best in security printing, system infrastructure and implementation of a government passport, identity or other security card scheme. The award judges comprise professionals of the anti-counterfeiting industries, including the Board of Directors of Reconnaissance International, the conference organiser and publisher of the ID & Secure Document News, a British periodic publication on international news of the latest anti-forgery technologies. The awards have commended the excellence and recognised the distinguished achievement of ImmD in developing the new smart identity card and the new e-Passport.

The new Hong Kong Smart Identity Card and the Next Generation HKSAR e-Passport were launched on November 26 last year and May 14 this year respectively. They are produced under strict control with state-of-the-art security features and sophisticated designs incorporated with a view to safeguarding personal data privacy and better deterring forgeries in the race of today's advancing technologies, providing the public and international communities with greater confidence in the documentation.

ImmD extends its gratitude to the HSPA for bestowing the annual awards on ImmD for its pioneering status in the field of issuing highly secured identity documentation. ImmD will continue to strive for excellence, keep abreast with the times, and make use of technology advancements to issue higher quality personal documentation and deliver better public services to Hong Kong residents.

