

Opening remarks by SLW at Gerontech and Innovation Expo cum Summit (English only)

Following is the opening remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, at the Keynote & Plenary Session of the Gerontech and Innovation Expo cum Summit this morning (November 20):

Bernard (Chairperson of Hong Kong Council of Social Service, Mr Bernard Chan), Dr David Lindeman (Director Health of Centre for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society of University of California, Berkeley and Director of Centre for Technology and Aging of the United States), Dr Lam Ching-choi (Chairman of Elderly Commission), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning everyone. May I begin by saying how pleased I am here today to kick off the Gerontech and Innovation Expo cum Summit 2019, and have the opportunity to share with you my views on the importance of gerontechnology.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to our overseas speakers and guests who have made time and efforts to come all the way to Hong Kong, amid our very challenging conditions.

As some of you may know, thanks to our world-class healthcare system and the healthy lifestyles of our citizens, Hong Kong's average life expectancy is the longest worldwide. According to a Hong Kong population projection made in 2017, by 2041, the number of people aged over 85 will hit more than half a million, tripling the number in 2016.

The major challenges of a rapidly ageing society include the increasing demand for long-term care services and decreasing labour supply. Our labour supply is projected to start decreasing by the year 2023 which is just around the corner.

To meet these challenges, gerontechnology is one key element. To a great extent, innovative gerontechnology products can effectively relieve considerable pressure from our care personnel and increase efficiency. This can in turn enhance the quality of service and the quality of life of our senior citizens. Gerontechnology products can also help our senior citizens to age at their own home in their familiar communities.

To encourage and facilitate our elderly service units to utilise more technology products, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has established the Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care (I&T Fund) in 2018. The \$1 billion Fund serves a dual purpose – on one hand to promote more extensive utilisation of gerontechnology, and on the other to provide subsidies to service units for their procurement of technology products.

The response has been very encouraging. For the first tranche of I&T Fund, applications were received from more than 210 service units for the acquisition of some 870 devices worth \$37 million. For the second tranche, the Fund received applications from 650 service units, covering more than 2300 products. It is estimated that the bulk of the \$1 billion Fund could be progressively disbursed within five years.

Given its importance, we believe that more marketing and promotions for gerontechnology should be conducted among service providers to introduce them to innovative and state-of-the-art products. For this purpose, the Government commissioned the Hong Kong Council of Social Service to organise the Gerontech Expo cum Summit. Already for the third year running, this year's event will be exhibiting the latest technological products, and at the same time providing a platform for relevant stakeholders to engage in dialogues and explore areas of collaboration. Furthermore, ageing population is a common phenomenon across the developed regions of the world. Though this summit is organised by and in Hong Kong, I do hope this effort will add to the collaborations among partners around the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our speakers today. They have brought with them invaluable insights and global experience which they will generously share with us. I have no doubt that the wisdom and knowledge of today's participants will inspire us a long way as we seek to formulate better elderly care policies and make Hong Kong a better place to live in.

Thank you very much!

Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Happy Valley

Special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Happy Valley today (November 20). The arrangements will come into effect one and a half hours before the start of the first race and will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

A. Traffic arrangements before the commencement of the first race

1. Road closure

Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp outside Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) will be closed except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel.

2. Traffic diversions

– Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the up-ramp outside

HKJC will be re-routed one way northbound;

- Traffic along eastbound Queen's Road East heading for Wan Chai and Happy Valley will be diverted to turn left to Morrison Hill Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along Queen's Road East cannot turn right to Wong Nai Chung Road except for vehicles heading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Queen's Road East will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Morrison Hill Road to turn right at the junction of Wong Nai Chung Road and Queen's Road East; and
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley or Racecourse will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, southbound Morrison Hill Road, Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road.

B. Traffic arrangements before the conclusion of race meeting

1. Road closure

The following roads will be closed from about 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- The up-ramp on Wong Nai Chung Road outside HKJC leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
 - Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
 - Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the Public Stands of HKJC;
 - Westbound Leighton Road between Wong Nai Chung Road and Canal Road East;
- and
- Southbound Morrison Hill Road between Leighton Road and Queen's Road East.

In addition, southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel and the Public Stands of HKJC will be closed from about 10 minutes before the start of the last race.

2. Traffic diversions

The following traffic diversions will be implemented from about 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- Eastbound Queen's Road East at its junction with Morrison Hill Road will be reduced to one-lane traffic heading for northbound Canal Road flyover;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Wan Chai will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, U-turn slip road beneath Canal Road flyover, Canal Road West and Hennessy Road;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road will be diverted to turn left to eastbound Leighton Road;

- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road; and
- Traffic along westbound Leighton Road will be diverted to Wong Nai Chung Road.

C. Learner drivers prohibition

Learner drivers will be prohibited to turn left from Caroline Hill Road to Leighton Road between one and a half hours before the start of the first race and one hour after the last race. In addition, learner drivers will be prohibited from accessing the following roads within the above period of time:

- Shan Kwong Road between Yik Yam Street and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Village Road between its upper and lower junctions with Shan Kwong Road;
- Percival Street between Hennessy Road and Leighton Road;
- Canal Road East; and
- The service road leading from Gloucester Road to Canal Road flyover.

D. Suspension of parking spaces

Parking spaces on southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Sports Road and Blue Pool Road will be suspended from 11am to 7pm during day racing, from 4.30pm to 11.59pm during evening racing, and from 5pm to 11.59pm during night racing.

Any vehicles found illegally parked within the precincts of the above affected areas will be towed away without prior notice.

Actual implementation of road closure and traffic diversion will be made by the Police at the time depending on traffic conditions in the areas. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience, and follow the instructions of Police on site.

[Government urges employers to show understanding and flexibility in work arrangements of employees due to traffic conditions](#)

â€‹The Government today (November 20) urged employers to make flexible work arrangements for staff to return to work having regard to traffic and road conditions occurring during the day. This will help maintain good labour-management relations and ensure the safety of employees and the smooth operations of establishments.

"For staff who cannot report for duty on time on account of conditions in road traffic or public transport services, employers should give due consideration to the circumstances of individual employees and handle each case flexibly," a Government spokesman said.

"The Government will similarly handle government employees in such situations with understanding. For staff who are unable to report to work on time because of traffic problems, they should inform their immediate supervisors as soon as possible and their departments will handle the cases flexibly."

Closure of some LCSD facilities in Yau Tsim Mong District

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (November 20) that due to special circumstances which happened nearby, the Hong Kong Science Museum, Hong Kong Museum of History and Tsim Sha Tsui Public Library in Yau Tsim Mong District are closed to ensure the safety of venue users and staff members. The department will closely monitor the situation and announce venue arrangements in a timely manner.

Subject to the situation, more cultural and leisure facilities in the same district and any other districts which may be affected will also be closed early and at short notice to ensure the safety of venue users. Members of the public who plan to go to those venues are advised to contact the venues concerned or 1823 in advance.

HKSARG responds to passage of acts on Hong Kong by US Senate

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (November 20) expressed deep regret over the passage of the "Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act" and another act on Hong Kong by the Senate of the United States (US) Congress.

A Government spokesman said, "The 'Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act' and the other act on Hong Kong are unnecessary and unwarranted. They will also harm the relations and common interests between Hong Kong and the US.

"Since the return to the Motherland, the HKSAR has been exercising 'Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong' and a high degree of autonomy in strict accordance with the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. The 'one country, two systems' principle has been fully and successfully implemented. 'One country, two systems' is the best arrangement for maintaining Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability and for making Hong Kong a favourable place to live and work in. The HKSAR Government will continue to implement the 'one country, two systems' principle resolutely in accordance with the Basic Law.

"Safeguarding human rights and freedoms is a constitutional duty of the HKSAR Government. Article 4 of the Basic Law stipulates that the HKSAR shall safeguard the rights and freedoms of the residents of the HKSAR and of other persons in the Region in accordance with law. Human rights and freedoms in Hong Kong are fully protected by the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance and other legislation, in addition to the Basic Law. Also, the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as applied to Hong Kong shall remain in force. The HKSAR Government attaches great importance to human rights and freedoms and is determined to safeguard them.

"In respect of the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019 (the Bill), the Chief Executive announced on June 15 that the Bill was suspended and later made it clear that all the legislative work had come to a complete halt. The Chief Executive further announced on September 4 that the HKSAR Government would formally withdraw the Bill and the Secretary for Security withdrew the Bill at the Legislative Council meeting on October 23.

"Since early June this year, there have been over 700 public demonstrations, processions and public meetings staged in Hong Kong. Many of them have eventually turned into violent illegal activities. In response, the Police have been exercising restraint and have been carrying out enforcement actions in strict accordance with the law. The Police have the statutory duty to maintain public safety and public order. Hence, whenever unlawful assembly or violent action occurs, the Police have to take appropriate actions to protect the life and property of the general public, bring offenders to justice and restore social peace.

"Regarding trade control, Hong Kong has in place a stringent regime which has all along been recognised internationally. Under the Basic Law, Hong Kong is a separate customs territory. We will as always implement comprehensive control on import, export and re-export of strategic commodities in accordance with the laws of Hong Kong and international control lists, as well as carry out rigorous enforcement.

"Concerning constitutional development, universal suffrage of 'one person, one vote' for selecting the Chief Executive and electing all members of the Legislative Council is enshrined as an ultimate aim in the Basic Law. To achieve this aim, the community needs to engage in dialogues, premised on the legal basis and under a peaceful atmosphere with mutual trust, with a view to narrowing differences and attaining a consensus agreeable to all sides. The HKSAR Government will assess the situation

carefully and take forward constitutional development in accordance with the Basic Law and the relevant Interpretation and Decisions of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress."

The spokesman said, "Hong Kong's unique status was conferred upon by the Basic Law, but not unilaterally granted by any country. The unique status of Hong Kong has all along been widely recognised and respected by the international community. Hong Kong's economic and trade status is also the same as that of other members of the World Trade Organization. Hong Kong has therefore established mutually beneficial co-operative relationship with various trade partners in the world including the US. According to US statistics, the US has in the past ten years earned the largest worldwide bilateral trade surplus with Hong Kong amongst her trade partners in the world, at over USD 33 billion in 2018. According to the latest statistics of Invest Hong Kong and Census and Statistics Department, there are 1 344 US companies in Hong Kong, of which 278 are regional headquarters. At the same time, about 85 000 US citizens live in Hong Kong. Any unilateral change of US economic and trade policy towards Hong Kong will create negative impact on the relations between the two sides as well as US' own interests."

The spokesman reiterated that foreign legislatures should not interfere in any form in the internal affairs of the HKSAR.