

Additional Support Measures under 80 per cent Guarantee Product of SME Financing Guarantee Scheme

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

The application period for the 80 per cent loan guarantee product under the SME Financing Guarantee Scheme operated by the HKMC Insurance Limited will be extended to June 30, 2019. In addition, to further alleviate the financing burden of local enterprises and assist enterprises to obtain financing from lending institutions, the following three additional support measures will be launched in November 2018, valid until the end of June next year:

1. further reduce the existing annual guarantee fee rates by 50 per cent;
2. increase the maximum loan amount from HK\$12 million to HK\$15 million; and
3. lengthen the maximum loan guarantee period from five years to seven years.

For public enquiries, please call the hotline of the SME Financing Guarantee Scheme (Tel: 2536 0392).

CHP investigates outbreak of acute gastroenteritis at kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Hung Hom

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (October 4) investigating an outbreak of acute gastroenteritis (AGE) at a kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Hung Hom, and hence reminded the public and management of institutions to maintain personal and environmental hygiene against AGE.

The outbreak involves nine boys and 13 girls aged 2 to 3, who developed vomiting and diarrhoea since September 28. They all sought medical attention. Among them, two required hospitalisation and were discharged after treatment. All patients have been in a stable condition.

Upon laboratory testing, the stool specimen of one affected child tested positive for norovirus while the stool specimen of another affected

child tested positive for sapovirus.

Officers of the CHP conducted a site visit and provided health advice to the staff of the school concerning proper and thorough disinfection, proper disposal of vomitus, and personal and environmental hygiene. The school has been put under medical surveillance.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP advised members of the public to take heed of the following preventive measures against gastroenteritis:

- Ensure proper personal hygiene;
- Wash hands thoroughly before handling food and eating, after using the toilet or after changing diapers;
- Wear gloves when disposing of vomitus or faecal matter, and wash hands afterwards;
- Clean and disinfect contaminated areas or items promptly and thoroughly with diluted household bleach (by adding one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite to 49 parts of water). Wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Pay attention to food hygiene;
- Use separate utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Avoid food that is not thoroughly cooked;
- Drink boiled water; and
- Do not patronise unlicensed food premises or food stalls.

The public may visit the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk) or call the Health Education Hotline (2833 0111) for more information.

[Hong Kong welcomes EU amendment to watchlist on tax co-operation](#)

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government today (October 4) welcomed the amendment made by the European Union (EU) on October 2 to its watchlist on tax co-operation in recognition of Hong Kong's latest efforts in participating in the Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters (the Convention).

"As an international financial centre, Hong Kong has all along been supportive of the efforts of the international community in enhancing tax transparency and combating cross-border tax evasion. We are confident that

Hong Kong will meet the prevailing standards on international tax co-operation, and will continue to closely liaise with the EU," a government spokesman said.

In 2017, Hong Kong made commitments to the EU on participation in the Convention and implementation of the automatic exchange of financial account information in tax matters (AEOI). Such commitments were set out in the watchlist published by the EU last year.

The Convention came into force in Hong Kong on September 1, 2018 to allow Hong Kong to effectively implement the AEOI and the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting package promulgated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. In view of such developments, the EU has updated its watchlist. Furthermore, Hong Kong smoothly conducted the first exchanges under the AEOI with the relevant jurisdictions in September this year.

In December 2017, the EU put some 40 tax jurisdictions, including Hong Kong, on the watchlist, on the consideration that the jurisdictions concerned had demonstrated commitment to international tax co-operation, while the EU would follow up on the implementation status of their commitments.

One more nomination for Legislative Council Kowloon West geographical constituency by-election received

One more nomination for the Legislative Council Kowloon West geographical constituency by-election was received by the Returning Officer today (October 4).

This brings the total number of nomination forms received to three since the start of the nomination period on October 2. The nomination period will continue until October 15.

Particulars of the nominees are available on the election website (www.elections.gov.hk/legco2018kwby/eng/nominat.html).

If the number of validly nominated candidates is more than one at the by-election, a poll will be held on November 25, 2018 (Sunday).

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cocaine (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 500 grams of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$520,000 at Hong Kong International Airport on October 1.

Customs officers inspected a parcel from Chile on October 1 and found the suspected cocaine inside a metal gear.

After a follow-up investigation, Customs officers yesterday afternoon (October 3) arrested a 35-year-old man suspected to be involved in the case in Sham Shui Po.

Investigation is ongoing.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to the Customs 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

