

## Flag-raising ceremony cancelled

Owing to the thunderstorm warning, the flag-raising ceremony to be conducted at Golden Bauhinia Square, Wan Chai at 8am today (July 26) will be cancelled.

If the thunderstorm warning is cancelled and weather conditions permit by then, the flag-raising ceremony may be resumed without further notice.

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## Health Bureau expresses gratitude to Mainland authorities and units for their support in delivering cord blood haematopoietic stem cell unit to HK for treatment of paediatric patient

â€‹The Health Bureau (HHB) expresses gratitude to various Mainland authorities and units for their support for and facilitation of the smooth delivery of a cord blood haematopoietic stem cell unit from the Mainland to Hong Kong today (July 25) for the treatment of a five-year-old girl suffering from thalassaemia.

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, said, "This exercise exemplifies the close relationship between Guangdong and Hong Kong. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the relevant Mainland authorities and units, including the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China and the Red Cross Society of China, for their substantial support which enabled the Guangdong Cord Blood Bank's smooth delivery of the cord blood haematopoietic stem cell unit to the Hong Kong Children's Hospital (HKCH), thereby bringing hope for the paediatric patient's treatment."

The HKCH has been providing treatment for the paediatric patient concerned and is planning to perform a haematopoietic stem cell transplant for her. After being made aware of the storage of the cord blood haematopoietic stem cell unit of the patient's relative at a cord blood bank in Guangzhou, the medical team communicated and collaborated with the cord blood bank to actualise the successful cross-boundary delivery of the cord blood haematopoietic stem cell unit.

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## Transcript of remarks by SCST at media session in Paris, France

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, at a media session after visiting the Olympic Village in Paris today (July 25, Paris time):

Reporter: There are lots of first-time athletes going to the Olympics from Hong Kong. What does it mean for the sports sector and the SAR (Special Administrative Region)? And also, after visiting the facilities, what further support is the Government going to give the athletes during their time in Paris?

Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism: This time we have quite a number of new athletes joining or coming to competing at the Olympics for the first time, which means that we have a very good training system, having new athletes coming in, having very high standard athletes starting to emerge in our system, which I think is very important for Hong Kong. Because we are not just looking at one or two excellent athletes, we would like to have a system that could continuously produce athletes up to the world standard. That's very encouraging to us and to everyone in Hong Kong.

And for the continuous support that we are going to give to our athletes for the rest of the Olympics, or actually we haven't started the Olympics yet. We have been in discussion with the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee (Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China) in the morning, basically to see whether there is anything that they would like the Government to support more. I think they are already providing very good support to the athletes. So we will see in the next few days if there are any more things that they think the Government could do to help. We will certainly provide assistance as necessary.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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## Speech by FS at Reception to Celebrate 203rd Anniversary of Independence of Republic of Peru (English only) (with

## photo)

â€œFollowing is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the Reception to Celebrate the 203rd Anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Peru today (July 25):

Consul General Cardenas (Consul General of the Republic of Peru in Hong Kong, Mr Enrique Carlos Cardenas Arestegui), distinguished guests, friends of Peru and Hong Kong, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening and Buenas noches.

First and foremost, congratulations to all our friends from Peru on celebrating the 203rd Anniversary of Peruvian Independence.

It is a great pleasure to join you all this evening to honour a truly remarkable country – a nation with a long and proud history, a unique and fascinating cultural heritage, and exceptional natural beauty and biodiversity.

Hong Kong and Peru are separated by more than 18 000 kilometres of Pacific Ocean. Yet, there is more that connects us than divides us. And as the old Chinese proverb says, "A close friend afar brings a distant land near." ï¼ˆæµ·å...šă~çŸ¥ă·± âœ•æŸ~è<¥æ~"é,,°ï¼‰

I was particularly impressed to learn that Peru has maintained a consular presence in Hong Kong for over 170 years, since 1852.

Today, we are here to reaffirm our friendship and look forward to new possibilities for closer collaboration in areas such as trade and commerce, tourism, arts, culture, and much more.

These possibilities are unfolding before our very eyes. Let me tell you why.

First, I am delighted to announce that the negotiations for the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between our two economies were fully concluded this Tuesday (July 23). Congratulations to the negotiating teams for their excellent work! This FTA will cover trade in goods and services, investment, intellectual property and other related areas.

It will further strengthen our business and financial links, enhancing our bilateral relations.

Last year, Peru was Hong Kong's fifth-largest trading partner in goods in Latin America. Our total merchandise trade amounted to more than HK\$5 billion. Over the past five years, our bilateral trade has grown at an average annual rate of four per cent. We are moving in the right direction.

Importantly, Hong Kong and Peru are prime connection points to wider markets in our respective regions. Hong Kong, in particular, is the "super

connector" and "super value-adder" for foreign companies looking to access the enormous market of the Chinese Mainland, the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region and beyond.

And Peru, supported by major infrastructure projects such as the Chancay Port, is set to become a new strategic gateway for trade across the Pacific.

With this in mind, it is very encouraging to witness the strong and enduring friendship between our country, China, and Peru. This spirit of friendship was in full view last month when President Xi Jinping welcomed President Dina Boluarte in Beijing.

During their meeting, President Xi emphasised the mutual respect and co-operation between China and Peru. He highlighted the opportunities arising from Peru's signing of a memorandum of understanding in 2019 on co-operation under the Belt and Road Initiative.

The two governments should, President Xi said, and I quote: "Synergise China's eight major steps to support high-quality Belt and Road co-operation with Peru's development needs".

Hong Kong is proud to play an important role in this endeavor, fully utilising our singular role in connecting capital, enterprises, projects and people.

It is clear that Hong Kong and Peru share a common goal of championing free and open trade, promoting regional collaboration and sustainable development.

These goals align perfectly with the mission of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), which strives to support sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

As a member of APEC, Hong Kong had the honour of hosting the second 2024 APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) Meeting in April.

It was a very fruitful meeting, bringing together over 200 ABAC delegates and representatives from all 21 APEC member economies. They engaged in open and constructive dialogue on important issues affecting the region.

As Peru is the Chair of APEC this year, I wish Peru every success in its leadership of APEC. I also look forward to visiting Peru in October to attend the APEC Finance Ministers Meeting.

Speaking of APEC, I attended the APEC Economic Leaders Meeting in San Francisco last year on behalf of the Chief Executive. There, I had the honour to meet with and talk to President Boluarte (Ms Dina Boluarte) at the margins of the meeting. She is a very charismatic leader, enthusiastic about strengthening co-operation between Peru and Hong Kong. I am sure the mutual relationship between our two economies will just grow stronger under her leadership.

Beyond the realm of business, we welcome more of Peru's fascinating arts

and culture to Hong Kong. Our city is a great stage for Peru to showcase its renowned creative, cultural and tourism offerings to people in this region and beyond.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we celebrate the 203rd Anniversary of Peruvian Independence, I firmly believe that we will build an even brighter future of friendship and collaboration together.

Please raise your glasses and join me in a toast: "To the people of the Republic of Peru". Salud!



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## CHP investigates two food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (July 25) investigating two epidemiologically linked food poisoning clusters affecting tourists of inbound tour groups from the Mainland. The CHP reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent foodborne diseases.

All affected persons had meals in Hong Kong and subsequently travelled to Macao with the tour groups and sought medical advice there. According to the epidemiological investigations by the CHP and Macao authorities, two clusters with 13 affected persons were identified.

The first cluster involved five males and three females aged between 48 and 68, who developed abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea about 14 hours after having lunch in a restaurant in To Kwa Wan on July 22. The stool sample of one of the patients tested positive for *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*.

The other cluster involved two males and three females aged between 26 and 57, who developed similar symptoms about nine hours after having lunch in the same restaurant on the same day.

All affected persons have sought medical advice in Macao. None of them

required hospitalisation and all of them are in stable condition.

Initial investigations revealed that the affected persons aforementioned had consumed common food, while some other tour groups also patronised the restaurant. The CHP is currently contacting other tour groups to find out if they are being affected. The personnel from the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department have conducted an inspection at the restaurant. The investigations of the CHP and the CFS are ongoing.

To prevent foodborne diseases, members of the public are reminded to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times. When dining out:

- Patronise only reliable and licensed restaurants;
- Avoid eating raw seafood;
- Be a discerning consumer in choosing cold dishes, including sashimi, sushi and raw oysters, at a buffet;
- Pre-cooked or leftover foods should be stored and reheated properly before consumption;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hotpot or barbecue meal;
- Handle raw and cooked foods carefully and separate them completely during the cooking process;
- Use two sets of chopsticks and utensils to handle raw and cooked foods;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine or wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.