

EDB and CMAB organise Award Presentation Ceremony for “Dreams to Greater Bay Area Come True” Itinerary Design Competition under Mainland Exchange Programmes for Students

The Education Bureau (EDB) and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) Development Office of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) have organised the Award Presentation Ceremony for Celebration of the 15th Anniversary of the Founding of the "Passing on the Torch" National Education Activity Series Platform: "Dreams to Greater Bay Area Come True" Itinerary Design Competition under Mainland Exchange Programmes for Students today (May 23). Teachers and students of the winning teams will be fully subsidised to join award-winning tours modeled on the itineraries of the champion teams, and attend the sharing sessions for experience sharing upon completion of the tours to deepen students' understanding of the development of the GBA.

The competition encourages secondary students to design routes for Mainland exchanges covering the GBA cities as destinations. Through the activities, students are encouraged to gather information to deepen their understanding of the interconnectivity, history and culture, innovative technology, and development opportunities of GBA cities, thereby broadening their horizons and cultivating their affection for the country.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Under Secretary for Education, Dr Sze Chun-fai, thanked the school sector for their active participation and support. More than 500 itinerary design proposals have been received, with nearly 2 000 students participating in the competition. He praised the students for their innovative designs, thoughtful itinerary planning and diversified themes, including intangible cultural heritage, aerospace technology, patriotic education and national security education, etc. The destinations cover different cities in the GBA, which demonstrate the students' deep understanding of GBA cities.

The competition is the celebration of the 15th anniversary of the founding of the "Passing on the Torch" National Education Activity Series Platform. Dr Sze expressed his gratitude to various executive chairpersons for their continuous leadership and the Central People's Government Offices in Hong Kong and eminent individuals from various sectors in Hong Kong for their strong support. More than 630 000 primary and secondary students have benefited since the establishment of the platform. Mainland exchange programmes for students cover 22 provinces, four autonomous regions and four municipalities. He also thanked the GBA Development Office for co-organising the competition with the EDB, providing students with more opportunities to

learn about the history, culture and development opportunities of the GBA, which will widen their horizons and foster their sense of national identity.

Other officiating guests at the award presentation ceremony included the Commissioner for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Ms Maisie Chan; Second-level Inspector of the Youth Department of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Mr Zhang Guolai; the Chairperson of the Assessment Committee for the "Dreams to Greater Bay Area Come True" Itinerary Design Competition, Mr Lung Chee-ming; and various executive chairpersons of the "Passing on the Torch" National Education Activity Series Platform.

Based on the champion itineraries of the junior secondary school winner, CUHK FAA Thomas Cheung Secondary School, and the senior secondary school winner, Chiu Lut Sau Memorial Secondary School, the EDB will organise two award-winning tours to Zhaoqing, Guangzhou and Foshan respectively in July 2025, and provide full subsidies for teachers and students of the winning teams to join the trips. Teachers and students of all winning teams will attend the sharing sessions to exchange experiences from their participation in the trips.

The list of awardees has been uploaded to the website of the "Passing on the Torch" National Education Activity Series Platform (www.passontorch.org.hk/en/index.html) and the designated webpage (www.bayarea.gov.hk/itinerary-design-competition/en/home/index.html).

Immigration Department repatriates 18 Vietnamese illegal immigrants and overstayers to Vietnam (with photos)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) carried out a repatriation operation today (May 23). A total of 18 Vietnamese illegal immigrants and overstayers were repatriated to Vietnam. The persons removed comprised five men and 13 women, all of whom were unsubstantiated non-refoulement claimants. Among them were discharged prisoners who had committed criminal offences and had been sentenced to imprisonment.

The ImmD has been committed to promptly removing unsubstantiated non-refoulement claimants from Hong Kong to maintain effective immigration control and safeguard the public interest. Under the updated removal policy effective from December 7, 2022, the ImmD may generally proceed with the removal of a claimant whose judicial review case has been dismissed by the Court of First Instance of the High Court, thereby enhancing the efficiency of and efforts in removing unsubstantiated claimants.

The ImmD will remain committed to expediting the removal process to repatriate illegal immigrants and overstayers from Hong Kong as soon as practicable according to the actual situation through appropriate measures as necessary.



HAD opens temporary heat shelters

The Home Affairs Department will continue to open 19 community halls/community centres as temporary heat shelters today (May 23).

The temporary heat shelters will remain open for people to take refuge from the heat when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force. From 10.30pm to 8am the next day, the temporary heat shelters will also provide bedding and a sleeping place for people in need. The shelters are manned by duty attendants.

For further information, please call the department's hotline before midnight on 2572 8427.

The heat shelters are located at:

Hong Kong Island:

Central and Western –
Kennedy Town Community Complex
1/F, 12 Rock Hill Street, Kennedy Town

Eastern –
Causeway Bay Community Centre
3/F, 7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern –
Lei Tung Community Hall
Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

Wan Chai –
Wan Chai Activities Centre
LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon:

Kowloon City –
Hung Hom Community Hall
1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices
42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

Kwun Tong –
Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre
71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po –
Shek Kip Mei Community Hall
G/F, Block 42, Shek Kip Mei Estate

Wong Tai Sin –
Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –
Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories:

Islands –
Tung Chung Community Hall
G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building, 39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –
Kwai Shing Community Hall
Podium, Block 6, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Chung

North –
Cheung Wah Community Hall
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung –
Hang Hau Community Hall
G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex, 38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau,
Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –
Lung Hang Estate Community Centre

Lung Hang Estate, Sha Tin

Tai Po –
Tai Po Community Centre
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall
G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –
Butterfly Bay Community Centre
Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –
Long Ping Community Hall
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

Yuen Long –
Tin Yiu Community Centre
Tin Yiu Estate, Tin Shui Wai

In addition to the above heat shelters, a number of community halls/community centres can also be used for taking refuge from the heat during their operating hours. For their address details, please browse the following document:

www.had.gov.hk/file_manager/en/documents/public_services/emergency_services/List_CH_CC_Day_E.pdf.

DH appeals to high-risk individuals to remain vigilant despite COVID-19 activity slowdown in Hong Kong

â€‹The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (May 23) said that there are early signs that the rate of increase in the COVID-19 activity level in Hong Kong has begun to slow down. However, it is expected to remain at a relatively high level in the near future. High-risk individuals, especially the elderly and those with underlying illnesses, should continue to stay vigilant and receive a free booster dose in a timely manner to minimise the risk of serious complications or death after infection.

"The CHP believes that COVID-19 has become an endemic disease with cyclical patterns. Epidemiological data from local and other regions around

the world show that there are generally periodic upsurges in the COVID-19 activity level every six to nine months. However, the timing of the increase in the activity level of COVID-19 may vary from region to region depending on local factors, such as the herd immunity of the population and changes in the circulating strains and vaccination rates," said the Controller of the CHP, Dr Edwin Tsui.

"Hong Kong has experienced an upsurge in COVID-19 cases since April this year, more than half a year after the last increase in July and August of last year. This increase is expected and similar to last year's increase, with no unusual situations. Although some surveillance indicators suggest that the upward trend of COVID-19 has begun to slow down over the past week, we expect the activity level of COVID-19 to remain at a high levels in the coming few weeks," Dr Tsui said.

According to the latest surveillance data as of the week ending May 17, the increase in the viral load of the SARS-CoV-2 virus from sewage surveillance and the test positivity rate of respiratory samples have slowed down when compared to the past week. Among them, the percentage of respiratory samples testing positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus increased slightly from 13.66 per cent in the week ending May 10 to 13.8 per cent. For sewage surveillance, the per capita viral load of SARS-CoV-2 virus increased from around 710 000 copy/litre to 770 000 copy/litre, but the rate of increase was significantly lower than that of the previous two weeks.

The upsurge of COVID-19 cases in the last one or two months is a regional phenomenon. Neighbouring areas such as Singapore, Thailand, Mainland China and Taiwan have also recorded a similar increase in the number of COVID-19 cases. Japan and Korea experienced upsurges of COVID-19 cases from January to February and from March to April this year respectively, and these surges have already slowed down. In North America and Europe, the activity level of COVID-19 peaked in the third quarter of last year, then declined in the fourth quarter, and has remained relatively stable so far this year.

"In general, the symptoms of COVID-19 infection in the general public are mostly mild, similar to other common respiratory infections. There is no need for the public to be overly concerned. However, high-risk groups (including the elderly and young children, persons with underlying illnesses and persons who are immunocompromised) are more likely to develop severe symptoms. Therefore, COVID-19 vaccination is important to protect these high-risk populations," Dr Tsui added.

Apart from vaccination, the public should maintain stringent personal, environmental and hand hygiene at all times to minimise the risk of contracting COVID-19 and other respiratory infectious diseases. When respiratory symptoms appear, one should wear a surgical mask, consider avoiding going to work or school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

For the latest surveillance data, members of the public can refer to the CHP's weekly [COVID-19 & Flu Express](#). For more information on vaccination,

please refer to the [COVID-19 Vaccination Programme webpage](#).

Update on dengue fever

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (May 23) reported the latest number of dengue fever (DF) cases, and urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From May 16 to yesterday (May 22), the CHP recorded one imported DF case. The patient had travelled to Indonesia during the incubation period.

As of yesterday, 22 imported DF cases have been recorded so far this year. A total of 161 cases of DF were recorded in 2024, including 156 imported and five local cases. In 2023, 62 imported cases of DF were recorded.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the global incidence of DF has markedly increased over the past two decades, posing a substantial public health challenge. In 2023, over 6.5 million cases and more than 7 300 dengue-related deaths were reported in over 80 countries/territories. In 2024, the WHO recorded over 14 million cases, which was a record number.

In neighboring areas, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam have each recorded over 10 000 cases so far this year, and Singapore also recorded nearly 2 000 cases. Meanwhile, according to the Guangdong Provincial Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Guangdong Province has recorded a total of six local cases this year in Foshan and Zhongshan since the first local case this year was reported in Foshan in March.

Detailed information on the latest DF situation in Hong Kong, as well as neighbouring and overseas countries and areas, has been uploaded to the CHP [website](#).

Members of the public returning from areas affected by DF should apply insect repellent for 14 days upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to a doctor.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;

- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers, and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Reapply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the following pages for more information: the DF page of the [CHP](#) and the [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), and the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).