

Visiting Mainland experts exchange views on EIA for Kau Yi Chau reclamation in Hong Kong (with photos)

The Development Bureau, the Civil Engineering and Development Department, and the Planning Department held an expert meeting today (July 11) to exchange views with a delegation of top environmental and ecological experts from the Mainland on the environmental impact assessment (EIA) study for the proposed reclamation works of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI) while the related EIA enters the final stage.

Members of the delegation included academicians of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, Director of the State Key Laboratory of Environmental Criteria and Risk Assessment, Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences, Mr Wu Fengchang; the former Director of the Third Institute of Oceanography of the State Oceanic Administration, Ministry of Natural Resources, Dr Yu Xingguang; and the former Director of the National Marine Environmental Monitoring Center of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, Dr Guan Daoming.

The Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn, thanked the Mainland experts for visiting Hong Kong to exchange views and offer guidance on the EIA study on the reclamation for the KYCAI. She said that KYCAI is a development project with strategic significance. With the provision of 1 000 hectares of new land in the long term and a strategic location, KYCAI will create a strong impetus for Hong Kong's development into a quality city. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is committed to conducting the EIA study with high standards, so as to promote high-quality development in support of the national initiative of building ecological civilisation. The project team conducted fact-based, comprehensive ecological surveys, which evaluated the environmental impacts and recommended suitable mitigation measures, with a scientific approach. The EIA report, currently being prepared, will be elevated to a higher level in terms of environmental quality with the guidance of various experts.

At the meeting, the experts conducted an in-depth discussion on various environmental and ecological issues, including hydrodynamics and water quality as well as ecology and fishery industry. Although climate change is not covered in the scope of the statutory EIA as it will not be intensified by reclamation works, the climate resilience of the artificial islands has been raised for discussion at the meeting since it is an issue of public concern. On the whole, the experts opined that the EIA report on the reclamation of the KYCAI has balanced the needs of development and conservation. The EIA covers various areas, which is reasonably scientific, with novel environmental mitigation measures employed. With a stringent approval mechanism, the project exemplifies the initiative of building ecological civilisation.

Ms Linn said that the experts gave positive comments and valuable views on the EIA report, which further strengthened its scientific analysis and basis of validation, and assisted the project team in enhancing the EIA report. The project team strives to submit the EIA report within this year to formally launch the statutory EIA process.

Also joining the meeting were members from the Independent Expert Panel and the Study Team's Professional Advisors on the KYCAI, including the President of the Macau University of Science and Technology, Professor Joseph Lee; Chair Professor of the School of Science and Technology of the Hong Kong Metropolitan University Professor Nora Tam; the Associate Head of Department of Biology of Hong Kong Baptist University, Professor Qiu Jianwen; and the founder of the Eco Institute, Mr Samson So.

The meeting was held at Tung Chung Community Liaison Centre in the afternoon. In the morning, the delegation visited the City Gallery in Central to learn about Hong Kong's overall urban planning. The delegation then took a boat trip to inspect the ecological environment in the vicinity of Kau Yi Chau and learn about the achievements of the reclamation project in Tung Chung.



HKSAR Government strongly condemns and opposes slanders and smears on Hong Kong by US under pretext of the so-called "national emergency"

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (July 11) strongly condemned and opposed the government of the United States (US) for, under the pretext of the so-called "national emergency", once again overriding the rule of law with politics, politicising human rights issues, and wantonly slandering the HKSAR's resolute implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL) to prevent, suppress and impose punishment for acts and activities endangering national security in accordance with the law.

A spokesman for the HKSAR Government said, "The US has repeated its tactics and breached the international law and the basic norms underpinning international relations, and wantonly interfering with the internal affairs of the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong matters by extending again the so-called 'national emergency with respect to Hong Kong', which is a despicable political manipulation. The US has time and again made skewed remarks about Hong Kong's situation and imposed so-called 'sanctions' on Hong Kong pursuant to its domestic law, attempting to interfere with Hong Kong's law-based governance and undermine the city's rule of law as well as its prosperity and stability. The HKSAR Government strongly condemns its political grandstanding rife with ill intentions, which have been seen through by all.

"The offences endangering national security stipulated by the NSL and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO) target acts endangering national security with precision, and define the elements and penalties of the offences with clarity. The prosecution has the burden to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the defendant had the actus reus and mens rea of an offence before the defendant may be convicted by the court. Law-abiding persons will not unwittingly violate the law. The HKSAR law enforcement agencies have been taking law enforcement actions to fight resolutely against acts and activities endangering national security based on evidence and strictly in accordance with the law.

"Since Hong Kong's return to the motherland, human rights in the city have always been robustly guaranteed constitutionally by both the Constitution and the Basic Law. The legal framework in safeguarding national security in the HKSAR is in line with relevant international human rights standards. The NSL and the SNSO clearly stipulate that human rights shall be respected and protected in safeguarding national security. The rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong residents under the Basic Law and the

provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applied to the HKSAR are protected in accordance with the law."

The spokesman stressed, "Endangering national security is a very serious offence. No country will watch with folded arms acts and activities that endanger national security. The NSL and the SNSO act like a studier door of Hong Kong and a more effective door lock to defend our home.

"The HKSAR Government will, as always, resolutely, fully and faithfully implement the NSL, the SNSO and other relevant laws safeguarding national security in the HKSAR, to effectively prevent, suppress and impose punishment for acts and activities endangering national security in accordance with the law, whilst upholding the rights and freedoms of Hong Kong people in accordance with the law, so as to ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of the principle of 'one country, two systems'. The HKSAR Government strongly demands the US to immediately stop acting against the international law and basic norms of international relations and interfering in Hong Kong matters which are purely China's internal affairs."

Service scope of Healthy Teeth Collaboration to expand

The Department of Health (DH) today (July 11) announced that starting from July 16, the free dental service provided under the Healthy Teeth Collaboration (the Programme) will extend from eligible adult persons aged 18 or above with an intellectual disability to those with an autism spectrum disorder.

â€‹The current service term for the Programme will be completed on July 15, 2024, and the new service period will be commenced on July 16, 2024, until March 31, 2027. Eight non-governmental organisation (NGO) dental clinics participating in the Programme listed below will provide free dental care services including oral check-ups, dental treatments and oral health education to eligible persons.

*Christian Family Service Centre Tokwawan Dental Clinic
Tel: 3590 9449

* Community Elderly and Special Care Dental
Tel: 2321 8299
WhatsApp: 6616 3554

* Hello Smile Hong Kong Limited
Tel: 3853 9672

WhatsApp: 5931 3940

* The Hong Kong Tuberculosis Association Rusy M Shroff Oral Health Services Limited
Tel: 3553 3535

*Loving Smiles Special Care Dental Centre
Tel: 2370 2669
WhatsApp: 5406 3928

* Stewards Peace Dental Clinic Limited
Tel: 2345 5251

*Tak Shun Dental Clinic
Tel: 2573 7533

* TWGHs Ho Yuk Ching Community Dental Clinic
Tel: 2581 0221

In addition, the service of the operating theatres of Gleneagles Hospital Hong Kong will be engaged if and when required by the dental clinics above.

Applicants under the Programme must be aged 18 or above with an intellectual disability and/or an autism spectrum disorder who hold one of the following documents certifying the disability category as "intellectual disability", "mental handicap" or "autism spectrum disability":

1. a valid Registration Card for People with Disabilities issued by the Labour and Welfare Bureau; or
2. a medical certificate issued by a doctor registered in Hong Kong; or
3. a certificate issued by the person-in-charge of a rehabilitation service unit under the designated types of rehabilitation services.

The Programme details, application form, as well as contact details and address of the NGO dental clinics are available at the DH's website (www.dh.gov.hk/english/main/main_ds/main_ds_dcp.html).

Applicants may select one of the participating NGO dental clinics and submit an application to the selected clinic. For enquiries, please call the NGO dental clinics listed above.

Secretary for Health chairs ninth meeting of High Level Steering Committee on Antimicrobial Resistance (with photos)

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, convened the ninth meeting of the High Level Steering Committee on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) today (July 11) to review the implementation of the Hong Kong Strategy and Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (2023-2027) and discuss the response strategies with relevant government departments and organisations.

Professor Lo said, "AMR is considered as one of the greatest threats to global health and economies. In this connection, the Government has long been attaching great importance to the necessity of tackling the issue of AMR. As inter-sectoral collaboration and communication across the community are crucial to mitigating such a threat, the Government has been rallying cross-sectoral co-ordination and co-operation of relevant government departments as well as organisations under the 'One Health' framework to implement various aspects of the Action Plan over the past few years."

Based on the initiatives laid down in the Action Plan, a series of actions against AMR have been taken. These include considering legislative amendments to mandate the recording of antimicrobial prescriptions and dispensing through electronic means, making use of information technology to strengthen antibiotic stewardship in public hospitals, enhancing surveillance and dissemination of AMR data in ready-to-eat food, implementing the "veterinary prescription-only medication supply" policy in local food animal farms, organising publicity campaigns to raise public awareness of the threat of AMR, and strengthening collaboration and partnerships among different stakeholders.

At today's meeting, the Steering Committee reviewed the progress of the actions taken according to the Action Plan and evaluated the latest local situation of AMR by analysing the relevant surveillance data from various sectors, namely human, animal and food. The data thereof showed that the wholesale supply of antimicrobials to community pharmacies continually dropped from 18.5 per cent in 2016 to 4.1 per cent last year. Moreover, out of the total antimicrobial supply in Hong Kong, the proportion of the antimicrobials under the "Access" classification of the World Health Organization (WHO) (i.e. those less likely to result in resistance) reached 60.2 per cent last year, thus achieving the target as advocated by the WHO.

The Hospital Authority (HA) has been promoting the prudent use of antimicrobials through its Antibiotic Stewardship Programme (ASP), playing a crucial role in the fight against AMR. The HA introduced an electronic platform known as "Smart ASP" this year to leverage data analytics to assess the appropriateness of antibiotic prescriptions. The platform also prompts

clinicians to review prescriptions if necessary. Furthermore, the HA closely monitors antibiotic consumption trends and AMR patterns. Among all, Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and Carbapenem-resistant *Acinetobacter* (CRA) showed a notable reduction by 3.0 and 8.9 percentage points respectively in 2023 compared with 2022. The HA remains committed to enhancing infection control measures and conducting routine audits to safeguard patient safety and combat AMR.

In terms of food safety, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department reminds the food trade and the public that raw or undercooked food is high-risk as it may carry bacteria with AMR. High-risk individuals, such as pregnant women, young children, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems (e.g. patients with chronic diseases), should avoid consuming raw or undercooked food whenever possible. The CFS highlights that the most effective way to reduce bacteria with AMR in food is to observe the Five Keys to Food Safety in daily life, namely choose safe raw materials, keep hands and utensils clean, separate raw and cooked food, cook thoroughly, and keep food at safe temperatures.

The Government calls on different sectors to continue working closely together to cope with the challenges brought about by AMR. Healthcare professionals should follow the guidelines on the prudent use of antimicrobials, while patients should strictly adhere to doctors' instructions when taking antimicrobials and should not buy antimicrobials on their own at community pharmacies without a prescription.

For details on information about AMR, members of the public may visit the [thematic website](#) of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health.

Chaired by the Secretary for Health, the Steering Committee was set up in May 2016 to encourage collaboration, synergy and cross-fertilisation among all professional sectors to jointly cope with the problems of AMR under the "One Health" framework. The Steering Committee comprises representatives from relevant government departments, public and private hospitals, healthcare organisations, academia and relevant professional bodies.



Hong Kong Customs further arrests two persons under unfair trade practice case involving rehabilitation institution

Hong Kong Customs conducted an enforcement action today (July 11) again and arrested two male directors of a rehabilitation institution. A staff member of the institution is suspected of having applied a false trade description to the service supplied, and of engaging in unfair trade practices involving a misleading omission, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO). As of today, three male directors and a male staff member of the rehabilitation institution have been arrested.

Customs earlier received information alleging that a staff member of a rehabilitation institution falsely claimed to a customer that the prepaid book fees for a two-year training course could be refunded. However, the institution did not refund the fees to the customer in the end.

In addition, the staff member had claimed that the accommodation deposit paid by the customer would be refunded after his children completed the course. However, it was only after the institution had ceased to provide the training course that the staff member informed the customer of a material information, i.e. the deposit would not be refunded even if the course was discontinued.

After investigations, Customs officers today arrested two male directors, aged 44 and 64, of the rehabilitation institution. The two arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation.

An investigation is ongoing, and the possibility of other persons involved in the case being arrested is not ruled out.

Under the TDO, any trader who applies a false trade description to a service supplied or offered to be supplied to a consumer commits an offence. Any trader who engages in a commercial practice that omits or hides material information or provides material information in a manner that is unclear, unintelligible, ambiguous or untimely, and as a result causes, or is likely to cause, an average consumer to make a transactional decision, commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TDO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).