

[HKSAR Government and MIIT sign co-operation agreement on new industrialisation \(with photos\)](#)

The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, and the Minister of Industry and Information Technology, Mr Jin Zhuanglong, witnessed the signing of the Co-operation Agreement on the Development of New Quality Productive Forces and the Promotion of New Industrialisation between the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) in Beijing today (September 19).

The Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, and Vice Minister of Industry and Information Technology Mr Xiong Jijun represented Hong Kong and the Mainland, respectively, in signing the co-operation agreement. The agreement aims to support Hong Kong in developing new quality productive forces and promoting new industrialisation according to local conditions. Moreover, it strengthens exchanges between the two sides in the fields of industry and information technology, promoting co-operation and joint development in industries where both places have clear advantages.

Mr Lee said, "The HKSAR Government actively develops new quality productive forces, promotes new industrialisation, and fosters better integration into the national system of industry and innovation. The signing of the co-operation agreement between the HKSAR Government and the MIIT today signifies the importance of our efforts to integrate into national development. The HKSAR Government will collaborate with the MIIT to further advance innovation, technology and industry, injecting new impetus into economic development and making greater contribution to the comprehensive promotion of Chinese modernisation to build a great country and achieve national rejuvenation."

Before the signing ceremony of the co-operation agreement, both sides updated each other on the latest policy initiatives for developing new quality productive forces and promoting new industrialisation. They also exchanged views on areas for strengthened co-operation and discussed how the two places could promote the development of innovation and technology while integrating into the overall national development.



[Executive Council approves financial arrangements for Hung Shui Kiu Station project](#)

The Chief Executive in Council approved on September 17 the financial arrangements for the Hung Shui Kiu Station (HSK Station) project. Subsequently, the Transport and Logistics Bureau has signed with the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) the project agreement for the HSK Station, construction of which is expected to commence this year for completion in 2030. The Government has been working closely with the MTRCL in taking forward the planning and design of the HSK Station, and will continue to support and co-ordinate the construction and commissioning of the project.

A Government spokesman said, "The HSK Station project is implemented under an ownership approach. The MTRCL will be responsible for the financing, design, construction, operation and maintenance of the project. The Government, supported by an independent checking consultant, has checked and verified the project financial estimates provided by the MTRCL. The capital cost estimate for the HSK Station project is about \$6.639 billion (in September 2024 prices). The Government will provide funding support to the

MTRCL in order to implement the project."

The Executive Council approved granting the MTRCL the property development rights of Planning Areas 28A and 28B of the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area (HSK/HT NDA) with an area of about 8.2 hectares, for residential and commercial development uses, and deducting a total fixed lump sum of \$9.850 billion in money-of-the-day prices from the full market value land premium of the sites assessed on a "with-railway" basis in the future as funding support to the MTRCL to implement the project.

"The Government has been advocating 'infrastructure-led' and 'capacity-creating' planning principles in taking forward transport infrastructure projects. The HSK Station will be an intermediate station on the Tuen Ma Line between the Tin Shui Wai Station and the Siu Hong Station. It primarily serves the future HSK/HT NDA in the western part of the Northern Metropolis, offering an alternative transport choice to residents in the vicinity. Currently, the journey between the HSK/HT NDA and the Tin Shui Wai Station or the Siu Hong Station by road transport takes about 20 to 25 minutes during peak hours. Upon the commissioning of the HSK Station, it is expected that the same journey by rail will only take about four minutes, thereby bringing significant transport benefits for the total population of the HSK/HT NDA of around 226 000 upon full population intake. The Government will continue to foster a collaborative culture with the MTRCL through enhanced project communication and supervision platforms for more effective project delivery to enable residents to enjoy the benefit as soon as possible," the spokesman added.

[HA commences seasonal influenza vaccination programme](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Public hospitals and outpatient clinics of the Hospital Authority (HA) will start providing seasonal influenza vaccinations to eligible persons starting from next Thursday (September 26) to dovetail with the Government Vaccination Programme 2024/25.

Under the Government Vaccination Programme 2024/25, the HA will mainly provide seasonal influenza vaccinations to eligible patients with regular attendance to public hospitals and outpatient clinics, including:

- chronic disease patients with regular appointments aged 2 to under 18 and 50 or above;
- expectant mothers undergoing an antenatal checkup; and
- identified persons with an intellectual disability, or disabled and chronic disease patients receiving Comprehensive Social Security

Assistance aged between 18 to 49.

The list of public hospitals and outpatient clinics providing vaccinations is set out in the Annex.

Eligible patients may receive vaccinations at the time of their scheduled follow-up appointments at clinics. Patients with a distant follow-up appointment date may visit or contact the respective clinics for necessary arrangements.

The Chief Infection Control Officer of the HA, Dr Raymond Lai, appealed to members of the public to receive vaccinations early. "High-risk individuals such as chronic disease patients, the elderly and children, and even healthy people, may develop severe complications after an influenza infection, leading to serious illness or death. As Hong Kong is about to enter winter, the risk of influenza transmission increases. Vaccinations can enhance immunity against influenza and greatly reduce the risk of serious illness or death from infection. Protection will develop in about two to four weeks after inoculation and last for at least six months, which would protect members of the public during the winter influenza season."

According to the recommendations from the Centre for Health Protection, COVID-19 vaccines can be administered at the same time with other vaccines, including seasonal influenza vaccines. General Outpatient Clinics (GOPCs) will provide both COVID-19 and influenza vaccinations for eligible patients while medical staff will offer advice based on their vaccination history.

In addition, poultry workers, pig farmers and people who are involved in the pig-slaughtering industry, as referred by relevant government departments, can also receive seasonal influenza vaccination in selected GOPCs starting from October 17 (Thursday).

Members of the public can enquire about the details of this year's seasonal influenza vaccination programme at the respective specialist outpatient clinics or GOPCs they are attending, or make enquiries on the HA hotline 2300 6555 during office hours.

2024/25 Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programmes to start on September 26

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (September 19) announced that the 2024/25 Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programmes, including the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach Programme and the Residential Care Home Vaccination Programme (RVP),

will begin on September 26. The CHP urged the public to receive the seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) to better protect themselves during the coming influenza season.

The local winter influenza season usually starts in January, while the summer surge occurs from July to August. For the influenza season which started in mid-January 2024, it ended in late July, lasting for 28 weeks. The predominant virus was initially influenza A (H3), which later shifted to A (H1) as the season progressed. The CHP believes that this prolonged influenza season was due to changes in the circulating influenza virus strains.

According to the latest surveillance data on the percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for seasonal influenza viruses and the influenza-related admission rate in public hospitals, local seasonal influenza activity currently remains at a low level. However, with the weather expected to become cooler, the CHP expects that local seasonal influenza activity will increase by the end of this year.

"SIV is one of the most effective means to prevent seasonal influenza and its complications. All persons aged 6 months or above, except those with known contraindications, are recommended to receive the SIV for personal protection," a CHP spokesperson said.

In the 2023/24 season, about 1 870 000 doses of seasonal influenza vaccines, an increase of about 20 per cent compared with the 2022/23 season, were administered under various programmes. The number of doses administered was a historical high with the concerted efforts of all stakeholders and parties.

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programmes

Under the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programmes for the 2024/25 season, the eligibility criteria for receiving free or subsidised SIV remain largely the same as in the previous season (Annex I). Eligible members of the public can receive free SIV at the following public venues. The recommended vaccination venues are as follows:

- Persons aged 50 years or above:
 - General persons: Vaccination by family doctors or District Health Centres
 - Persons with chronic illness: Vaccination by public or private clinics providing regular follow-ups
- Persons aged 18 to 49 years who are mentally handicapped/disabled or Comprehensive Social Security Assistance recipients with chronic illness: Vaccination by family doctors or public/private clinics providing regular follow-ups
- Children and adolescents aged 2 to under 18 years:
 - General children: Vaccination through the Seasonal Influenza

Vaccination School Outreach Programme or by family doctors

– Children with chronic illness: Vaccination by public or private clinics providing regular follow-ups

- Children aged 6 months to under 2 years: Vaccination by family doctors or Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs)
- Pregnant women: Vaccination by family doctors, public, or private antenatal clinics

To make vaccinations more accessible this year, the Government will introduce additional vaccination venues, including the DH's MCHCs for all children aged 6 months to under 2 years, and 16 District Health Centres/District Health Centre Expresses, providing more choices for the public. For a list of vaccination venues, please refer to the CHP's [Vaccination Schemes](#) page.

Starting from 9am on September 23, parents of children aged 6 months to under 2 years may book an appointment for their children to receive vaccinations at designated MCHCs via the online booking system: https://booking.covidvaccine.gov.hk/forms/sivfhs/index_en.jsp.

Over 1 600 doctors have enrolled in the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS). The Government will provide a subsidy of \$260 per dose of vaccination. Over half of the enrolled VSS doctors will not charge extra in addition to the Government's subsidy. For the list of VSS doctors, please visit: <https://apps.hcv.gov.hk/Public/en/SPS/Search>.

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach Programme

Under the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach Programme, secondary schools, primary schools, kindergartens, and child-care centres can arrange outreach vaccination teams to provide SIVs to schoolchildren. Schools may choose to join the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach Programme (SIVSOP) and/or the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS) School Outreach Programme. Under SIVSOP, the DH will arrange vaccination teams to provide free SIV for participating schoolchildren. The vaccines will be provided by the DH, and a subsidy of \$105 per dose will be given to doctors.

Schools may also arrange outreach vaccinations under the VSS School Outreach Programme by selecting a doctor and making arrangements for the outreach activity, including the type of vaccine to be provided. The Government will provide a subsidy of \$260 per dose to the doctor. In addition to schoolchildren, other individuals such as school staff and students' parents can also receive SIVs during the outreach vaccination activity.

To improve vaccine coverage among schoolchildren, the SIVSOP has implemented the following special arrangements for the 2024/25 season:

- Kindergartens and child-care centres can choose both injectable

inactivated influenza vaccines (IIV) and live attenuated influenza vaccines (LAIV) (i.e., nasal vaccines) for the same or different outreach vaccination activities.

- So far, 860 kindergartens and child-care centres have arranged vaccination activities for their schoolchildren. Among them, 246 schools will offer LAIV, seven schools will offer both LAIV and IIV, and the rest will offer IIV this year.
- As a pilot scheme, LAIV will also be provided to selected primary and secondary schools which indicated their preference for LAIV earlier this year. The DH will continue to monitor and review the arrangement as appropriate.

Currently, around 860 kindergartens and child-care centres (79 per cent), 610 primary schools (92 per cent), and 380 secondary schools (75 per cent) have arranged vaccination activities for their schoolchildren. Based on local experience, participation in outreach vaccination programmes can significantly increase the influenza vaccination rate among schoolchildren by more than double, reaching an average vaccination rate of 70 per cent, effectively strengthening the immunity barrier among schoolchildren. The Government encourages schools that have not yet enrolled to sign up for the outreach vaccination programme as soon as possible.

Residential Care Home Vaccination Programme

Under the Residential Care Home Vaccination Programme, the DH will deliver vaccines for free to care homes. Visiting medical officers enrolled in the programme are invited by institutions to provide vaccination services to eligible residents. The subsidy will be \$105 per dose. Residents and staff of residential care homes for the elderly and persons with disabilities, non-institutionalised persons with intellectual disabilities (PID) receiving services, staff working in designated institutions serving PID, and residents and staff of residential child-care centres can receive vaccination services from outreach teams starting from September 26.

The Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) under the CHP has recommended that the composition of vaccines for the 2024/25 influenza season should align with the World Health Organization's latest recommendations. For details on the trivalent or quadrivalent influenza vaccines to be used in the 2024/25 northern hemisphere influenza season, please refer to the [SCVPD's recommendations](#).

Both IIVs and LAIV are recommended for use in Hong Kong by the SCVPD. Depending on the brand, most IIVs are recommended for use in people aged 6 months or older, including healthy individuals, pregnant women, and those with chronic medical conditions. LAIV can be used for people aged 2 to 49

(except those who are pregnant, immunocompromised, or have other contraindications).

The public, especially those in the eligible groups, may call the CHP's enquiry hotline (2125 2125) during office hours or visit the CHP's [Vaccination Schemes](#) page for more information on the above vaccination schemes.

FS calls on Ministry of Finance in Beijing (with photos)

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, accompanying the Chief Executive on his visit to Beijing, called on the Minister of Finance, Mr Lan Fo'an, this afternoon (September 19). He thanked the Ministry of Finance for its staunch support to Hong Kong in various areas. They had in-depth exchanges on the economic and financial situations of the Mainland, Hong Kong and the world, the development of Hong Kong as an international financial centre, the mutual access between the capital markets of the Mainland and Hong Kong, as well as strengthening the co-operation of audit supervision on Mainland enterprises listed in Hong Kong. The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, and the Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Financial Services), Ms Salina Yan, also participated in the meeting.

Upon arriving in Beijing, Mr Chan visited the research and development headquarters of a Mainland new energy vehicle enterprise and met its representatives. The company, listed in Hong Kong and supported by the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, is positively considering to conduct some key scientific research projects, establish a financial management centre and a trade settlement centre in Hong Kong, as well as to launch research co-operation with Hong Kong universities and research institutions. Mr Chan said that Hong Kong has competitive advantages in artificial intelligence, new energy and new materials, along with international capital and a pool of research and development talent. He encouraged the company to leverage Hong Kong's advantages of being a dual hub of an international financial centre and an innovation and technology centre to launch research and development, expand into the global market and grow its business.

Mr Chan will continue his visit to Beijing tomorrow (September 20) and accompany the Chief Executive to attend the 27th Beijing-Hong Kong Economic Cooperation Symposium and Beijing-Hong Kong Cooperation Promotion Conference.

