

[Transcript of remarks by SCS on civil service pay offer at media session \(with video\)](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mrs Ingrid Yeung, at a media session on offers of 2023-24 civil service pay adjustment at the Central Government Offices this afternoon (June 6):

Reporter: Because unions are calling for an across-the-board 5 per cent pay rise for civil servants, so why is the Government deciding to raise the pay like this this time? And also because you mentioned that factors of previous years won't affect this year's pay rise as well, so how about inflation? And also do you think this is enough to attract new people joining the civil service jobs?

Secretary for the Civil Service: The Chief Executive (CE)-in-Council considers all six factors in coming to a decision on civil service pay adjustment every year. This year is no exception. The CE-in-Council has considered all six factors and has taken a balanced view. On past considerations, every year, the CE-in-Council makes a decision based on all the six factors and therefore, in the year following, the factors in the previous year, which had been taken into account already, would not be considered again. Every year, the CE-in-Council makes a new decision. On the point of inflation, every year, the CE-in-Council takes into consideration the change in cost of living. Last year, it had been taken into account; this year, again the new figures have been taken into account. So every year, the cost of living has been duly considered by the CE-in-Council.

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

[Suspicious mobile application and phishing instant messages related to Bank of China \(Hong Kong\) Limited](#)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited relating to a suspicious mobile application (App) and phishing instant

messages, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the App or instant messages concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes worth about \\$28 million \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 7.7 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$28 million and a duty potential of about \$19 million at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound on June 2.

Through risk assessment, Customs on that day selected for inspection a 40-foot seaborne container, declared as carrying facial masks, arriving in Hong Kong from Korea. Upon inspection, Customs officers seized the batch of illicit cigarettes inside the container.

An investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to combat illicit cigarette activities on all fronts through risk assessment and intelligence analysis.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

Customs reminds members of the public that it is an offence to buy or sell illicit cigarettes. Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying illicit cigarettes commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

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



[Transport Department reminds vehicle owners to pay outstanding tolls](#)

The Transport Department (TD) today (June 6) reminded that the HKeToll has been implemented at the Tsing Sha Control Area (TSCA) (Eagle's Nest Tunnel, Sha Tin Heights Tunnel and Tai Wai Tunnel), Shing Mun Tunnels and Lion Rock Tunnel. Vehicle owners who have used these tunnels without paying must pay the toll within 14 business days after passing through the tunnels.

For instance, the latest date for vehicle owners who used Shing Mun Tunnels on the commissioning date of the HKeToll (May 21) to pay the tunnel toll is June 9. The vehicle owner should immediately log on to the HKeToll website (hketoll.gov.hk) or mobile app to check and pay the outstanding toll, either by credit card, by following the instructions to generate a QR code to either pay via the Faster Payment System or at 7-Eleven convenience stores by cash. Payments of outstanding tolls can also be made at the four customer service centres and four service outlets.

Motorists should note that each count of late payment will incur an initial surcharge of \$175. If the vehicle owner does not pay the unpaid toll and the initial surcharge in full by the expiry of 21 calendar days after the date on which a surcharge notice is served, a further surcharge of \$350 will be imposed. The penalty for evading tolls is a fine of \$5,000 (per trip). The TD will also reject applications for licence renewals for the vehicles concerned.

If vehicle owners need assistance, they can browse the HKeToll website, call the 24-hour customer service hotline 3853 7333, or visit the four customer service centres, four service outlets, two car park service

counters, and consultation counters located at designated MTR stations and Home Affairs Enquiry Centres in the New Territories District Offices. The locations and service hours of the above-mentioned facilities are shown at the Annex.

As of June 5, more than 760 000 vehicle tags had been issued, accounting for over 94 per cent of licensed vehicles in Hong Kong, of which about 82 per cent of vehicle owners had opened HKeToll accounts. The HKeToll collected tolls of about 200 000 vehicle trips on average per day at the TSCA, Shing Mun Tunnels and Lion Rock Tunnel.

With the progressive implementation of the HKeToll in Government tolled tunnels, the TD once again appeals to vehicle owners to complete the three steps for HKeToll service as soon as possible: (1) install a vehicle tag, (2) open an HKeToll account and (3) set up an automatic payment means, so as to fully enjoy the convenience of the HKeToll.

Speech by SITI at Beckoning the Inaugural Hong Kong Laureate Forum press conference (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the Beckoning the Inaugural Hong Kong Laureate Forum (HKLF) press conference today (June 6):

Professor Tong (Chairman of the HKLF, Professor Timothy Tong), distinguished guests, friends from the media, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It is indeed my pleasure to share the stage with members of the Board of the Council of the Hong Kong Laureate Forum today to announce the launching of the Hong Kong Laureate Forum this November.

Hong Kong is world-renowned to be a welcoming place for investment and talent, a place of world-class infrastructure and with ease of doing business, but less known for our strength and prowess for innovation and technology. But as you just heard from Professor Tong in his welcoming remarks, Hong Kong is actually home to the Shaw Prize, once described as the "Nobel Prize of the East", for 20 years. This goes to show that as a community, we have always celebrated academic achievements and recognised the role of science in advancing human knowledge and enhancing our lives, whether it is in medicine or communication.

As for the Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region) Government, innovation and technology development has always been a top priority for us. We have, over the past decades, supported local universities in scientific

research and development with generous allocation of resources. Our effort is reflected in the fact that five universities in Hong Kong continued to sit in the top 100 of both the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and the QS World University Rankings in 2023.

In recent years, we have been stepping up our efforts in providing an environment that is conducive to scientific research and development, and realisation of innovation beyond the campus. For hardware, we have advanced our infrastructure in the form of expansion of the Science Park and Cyberport, the development of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park as well as InnoHK research clusters; as for the software, we are allocating more resources to nurture local talent in the form of increasing public-funded research post-graduate places and through introducing new schemes to attract non-local science and technology talent. All these put together, we have created an innovation and technology ecosystem that is ripe for action.

That is why the Hong Kong SAR Government is fully behind the work of the Council of the Hong Kong Laureate Forum and the hosting of the Forum this November. The Forum will bring together some of the brightest minds in the scientific community from around the globe to share their research and insights. It will provide a chance for youngsters, including those from Hong Kong, to learn about the craft, the journey of top scientists from all over the world, as well as to broaden their horizons and to inspire them to follow suit. It will also provide an opportunity for us to showcase the advances in innovation and technology development here in Hong Kong through visits to research institutes and dialogues with local renowned scientists.

With the fantastic lineup of speakers and programmes planned for the Forum, I am confident that the Council of the Hong Kong Laureate Forum will make the coming Forum a resounding success and an enjoyment experience. I am also just as excited that scientists, young and young at heart, will get to witness our city's commitment to scientific innovation and the progress we have made.

I am looking forward to the great event and hope to see you then. Thank you very much.