

Statement by ITB on "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app

A spokesman for the Innovation and Technology Bureau today (February 19) expressed anger at an alliance using the excuse of "healthcare" to publicly disseminate false information concerning the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app in an attempt to mislead the public and interfere with anti-epidemic work.

The "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app does not require registration for use. The app does not have a tracking function, and venue check-in data will not be uploaded or transferred to the Government or any other systems. Such data are saved on users' mobile phones only. Matching of users' check-in data and the issuing of health alerts will only be carried out within the app. Users' whereabouts will not be disclosed to others. The app does not pose a risk to privacy. Given that the app has undergone and passed security risk assessment and auditing as well as privacy impact assessment conducted by independent third parties to ensure its compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, members of the public can feel at ease when using the app.

S for IT visits smart city initiatives (with photos)

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, visited various smart city initiatives today (February 19) to learn more about the implementation and progress of smart city development in Hong Kong.

The Chief Executive Officer of the CUHK Medical Centre (CUHKMC), Dr Fung Hong, accompanied Mr Sit for a smart hospital visit. They toured the hospital's ward, out-patient clinic and pharmacy to better understand smart healthcare, services, and management there. These included a paperless electronic medical record system; a linen management system; an automated drug dispensing and unit dose packaging system; and hospital beds equipped with infotainment panels facilitating Internet access, tele-visits, tele-consultations, etc. Mr Sit was also shown a demonstration on the use of mobile 5G for tele-education, Bluetooth for indoor navigation, and ultra-wide band for real-time location tracking. Mr Sit was pleased to see the numerous innovations, and that with the use of Internet of Things (IoT), mobile information and communications technology and real-time data, the efficiency of hospital operations and patient-oriented services is enhanced.

Mr Sit then went to MetroPlaza in Kwai Fong to see for himself the

application of the Smart Washroom AIoT Solution developed by local start-up Blutech IoT Ltd. The system integrates artificial intelligence and IoT technologies and deploys various smart sensors, smart washroom signage and big data analysis to give precise information to visitors on a washroom's occupancy and waiting time, and property management on usage and sanitation. With the aid of technology, better replenishment and management can be achieved. Mr Sit said that while he is glad to see the Smart Washroom AIoT Solution being the winner of Award of the Year at the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2020, it is really encouraging to see this local technology solution being commercialised and opening its market in shopping malls.

At the Kwai Chung Customhouse, Mr Sit received a briefing on Smart Customs by Assistant Commissioner of the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED), Mr Jimmy Tam. The C&ED actively employs innovation and technology to enhance its law enforcement capability and customs clearance efficiency. With the support of the Innovation and Technology Bureau (ITB)'s TechConnect (block vote), the C&ED started a study on the development of a Cargo Big Data System together with the Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre. By making use of big data analytics and artificial intelligence to strengthen the risk management capability on cargo clearance, it is hoped that smuggling activities could be further combatted and overall effectiveness in law enforcement and trade facilitation would continue to be enhanced.

The TechConnect (block vote) set up by the ITB supports government departments in planning and implementing technology projects with adoption of suitable technologies, including pilot schemes and researches, to enhance operational efficiency and public service delivery. The scheme has supported funding of \$440 million for 84 applied technology projects or studies proposed by 30 departments so far. Mr Sit encouraged the C&ED to continue to strive for excellence and enhance operational efficiency and improve public services by use of technology.

Mr Sit said, "While the COVID-19 pandemic has changed our daily lives and business operation modes a lot, it has also expedited digital transformation and technology application. We released the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong 2.0 last December, setting out more than 130 smart city initiatives. A new chapter on 'Use of I&T in combating COVID-19' is also in place to address the new normal.

"Smart city development aims to deliver benefits and convenience to members of the public and allow them to better perceive the benefits of a smart city and I&T in their daily lives. Hong Kong has a strong base on which to build a smart city. We will continue to work with various sectors and make full use of our research and development results in building a smarter Hong Kong."



[Announcement of fourth round results of Public Policy Research Funding Scheme 2020-21](#)

The Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO) announced today (February 19) the results of the fourth round applications to the Public Policy Research (PPR) Funding Scheme in 2020-21.

The PPR Funding Scheme aims to promote public policy research and provide evidence-based research to facilitate public policy discussion. Applications are accepted throughout the year. For the fourth round exercise in 2020-21, PICO received 27 applications. On the advice of an assessment panel, PICO has supported five projects with total funding of about \$2.2 million.

Applications to the PPR Funding Scheme are assessed by an independent assessment panel, chaired by and comprising experienced academics, who will take into account comments of reviewers who are academics and experts outside the panel in considering the applications. Each application is considered on its merits and relevance to public policy development in Hong Kong. A declaration of interests system is in place to ensure that the assessments

are fair and impartial.

Details of the funded projects have been uploaded to PICO's website (www.pico.gov.hk/en/PRFS).

LCSD reminds patrons to return overdue library items

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (February 19) that as the Hong Kong Central Library, six other major libraries and 31 district libraries have reopened today, and all self-service library stations and book drops continue to provide service, the calculation of overdue fines will resume on March 5. All library items borrowed before the reopening of public libraries and not returned before March 5 will be charged an overdue fine. Patrons are advised to return their overdue items as soon as possible to avoid incurring overdue fines. For details, please visit www.hkpl.gov.hk/en/index.html.

Import of poultry meat and products from areas in Korea, Germany and Poland suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (February 19) that in view of notifications from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N8 avian influenza in Yeongju-si of Gyeongsangbuk-Do Province in Korea and in Märkisch-Oderland District of the State of Brandenburg in Germany, and a notification from the General Veterinary Inspectorate of Poland about an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in Zielonogórski District of Lubuskie Region in Poland, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the above-mentioned areas with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 1,190 tonnes of chilled and frozen poultry meat and about 11.15 million poultry eggs from Korea, about 3,900 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 1.41 million poultry eggs from

Germany and about 13,500 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 39.08 million poultry eggs from Poland last year.

"The CFS has contacted the Korean, German and Polish authorities over the issues and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.