

# Virtual InnoCarnival 2020 launched to share joy of innovation and technology (with photos)

Organised by the Innovation and Technology Commission, the Virtual InnoCarnival 2020 was launched today (December 23) to run until December 31. Under the theme "Collaborate½ Innovate½ Beyond Imagination", the event showcases an array of the latest local innovations and research achievements in collaboration with around 50 programme partners. It also features a series of InnoTech workshops and webinars. Members of the public are welcome to join.

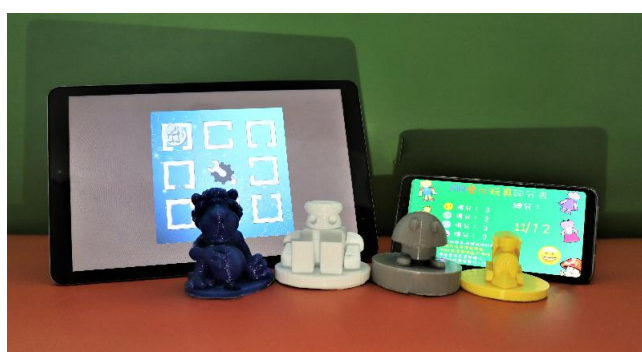
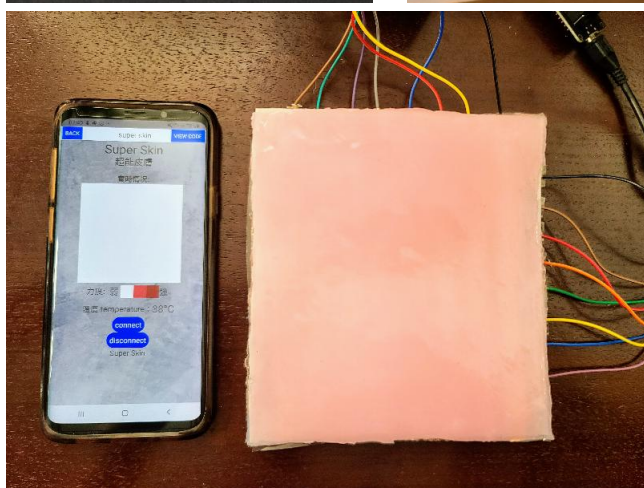
In his speech for the launch of the event, the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, said that the Government has allocated over \$100 billion over the past three years to support various policy initiatives for promoting the development of innovation and technology (I&T) infrastructure and an I&T ecosystem, pushing forward Hong Kong's I&T development on all fronts and at full steam. The Government will continue to invest in the future to improve the quality of life and to create more quality employment opportunities for the young generation. It will also continue to strengthen the support for nurturing and attracting talent, expanding the I&T talent pool for local I&T development to further flourish.

The Virtual InnoCarnival 2020 offers a one-stop online platform to showcase over 170 I&T outcomes from local universities, research and development (R&D) organisations, government departments, non-government organisations and technology enterprises, enabling the public to appreciate the contribution of the local I&T industry to society on various fronts, igniting people's interest in I&T and further promoting an I&T culture in the community.

A special feature of the online platform, the Knowledge Hub, introduces 37 local R&D projects funded by the Innovation and Technology Fund which have won awards at the International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva and other international accolades, giving visitors a glimpse of the remarkable local research achievements.

During the carnival, 72 InnoTech workshops covering a wide range of topics and around 40 I&T webinars given by industry professionals, as well as creativity competitions and games, will be held online to enhance public awareness of the importance of I&T in daily life and to nurture youngsters' creativity.

All the activities of the Virtual InnoCarnival 2020 are free. Some of them require pre-registration. For details and registration arrangements, please visit the campaign website ([innocarnival.hk](http://innocarnival.hk)) or contact the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (Tel: 2561 6149; email: [innocarnival@hkfyg.org.hk](mailto:innocarnival@hkfyg.org.hk)).



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## [HKO wins at WMO's first international weather apps competition \(with photo\)](#)

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) announced on December 15 that the mobile application "MyObservatory" developed by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) won in the "Public weather forecasts and information – information content" category and earned an honourable mention in the "Specialised apps award – weather warnings" category at the WMO International Weather Apps Awards 2020 (WIWAA).

The WMO is a specialised agency in weather and climate under the United Nations. The WMO WIWAA was organised for the first time in this year to recognise well-designed mobile applications for providing reliable weather and climate information. The competition received more than 110 entries from all over the world.

"MyObservatory" is the official weather mobile application developed by the HKO, and has been downloaded more than 8 million times. "MyObservatory" provides a range of personalised weather information services, including location-based rainfall and lightning forecasts, which provides rainfall and lightning forecasts in users' or designated locations based on artificial intelligence technologies, and the trial "Dr Tin" Chatbot Service, which provides a convenient and interactive means for users to enquire about weather information.

For details of the WIWAA, please refer to the website of the WMO: [public.wmo.int/en/media/news/wmo-announces-winners-of-weather-apps-awards-and-calendar-competition](http://public.wmo.int/en/media/news/wmo-announces-winners-of-weather-apps-awards-and-calendar-competition).



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## **Buildings Department extends special work arrangements to January 6, 2021**

To align with the Government's announcement on December 21 that the special work arrangements for government employees will be extended until January 6, 2021, the Buildings Department (BD) announced today (December 23) that it will continue to provide emergency and essential public services during this period. The services will be mainly handling public reports on building safety and unauthorised building works in progress, processing critical statutory submissions for new developments and applications for registration of building professionals and contractors, providing advisory services for licensing authorities, implementing Operation Building Bright 2.0, and conducting the special operation to inspect the fire safety of old domestic and composite buildings.

Submission of the following applications and documents in person should be through:

- (1) A drop-in box located at G/F, BD Headquarters, North Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, for receiving documents from members of the public from 10am to 4pm from Monday to Friday. The BD will issue receipts/acknowledgements of submissions in due course;
- (2) A tender/quotation box located at the ground floor of BD Headquarters for

receiving tender/quotation documents from 8.30am to 5.30pm from Monday to Friday; and

(3) The receipt and dispatch counter at the office of the BD's New Buildings Division on 7/F, 14 Taikoo Wan Road, Taikoo Shing, Hong Kong, for collection of statutory applications and related documents and forms for new building works from 9.30am to 3.30pm from Monday to Friday. Applicants will collect the processed plans and related documents from the receipt and dispatch counter by appointment.

Under the special work arrangements, the handling time of the BD's services may be longer than usual. There will be continued communication between BD officers and members of the public/the sector regarding their cases and applications through email and telephone contact.

The Building Information Centre at 2/F, BD Headquarters (a hotline on 3842 5375 has been set up to handle enquiries on requests for inspection and viewing of building records), the receipt counter and general enquiry counter at G/F, BD Headquarters, and all meeting rooms of the BD will not be open to the public until further notice. All appointments, meetings (except meetings essential to meet statutory requirements such as Minor Works Contractors Registration Committee meetings) and inspections scheduled for the period will be rescheduled to later dates and the individuals concerned will be notified in due course.

The BD appeals to the public to minimise visiting the department's offices in person unless they genuinely require its public services urgently. The public may call 1823 to make emergency reports. For general enquiries and reports, members of the public may call 1823 or inform the department by email ([enquiry@bd.gov.hk](mailto:enquiry@bd.gov.hk)), online reporting ([eform.one.gov.hk/form/bd0001/en/](http://eform.one.gov.hk/form/bd0001/en/)), fax (2537 4992) or post (North Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon). In addition, electronic information can be submitted to the BD via [receipt@bd.gov.hk](mailto:receipt@bd.gov.hk).

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## **Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

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## FHB responds to media enquiries

In response to media enquiries on the testing arrangements for confirmed cases number 7916 and number 8249 of COVID-19, the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) responded as follows on December 22:

The Government has been taking a multi-pronged approach to strengthen surveillance and testing efforts in order to identify cases in the community as soon as possible and help cut the transmission chains. The Government provides free tests for members of the public through various channels, including public clinics and private doctors, for regular surveillance and early identification of confirmed cases, but not for private purposes (e.g. for work or travel certificates for individuals). The above-mentioned regular testing is handled and followed up by the Department of Health (DH) and the Hospital Authority (HA).

With regards to the tests under the above-mentioned types of surveillance, the practice that has been adopted is that people whose test results are confirmed as positive by the DH will be notified by the Department by phone in accordance with the established procedures and will be arranged to be sent to a public hospital for isolation and treatment; while those who are tested negative will not be notified. The general advice of the DH and the HA is that a person can assume a negative test result if he or she has not been notified a few days after doing the test.

The Government understands that members of the public want to be notified of the results after taking the test. In response to public demand, the FHB, the DH and the HA have gradually improved their computer systems since the end of November in order to notify people who have been tested negative via SMS messages. During the process of changing the computer system, due to technical problems in the relevant system, some people have not received the SMS messages containing their negative test results after being tested.

After discovering the above technical problems, the Government has immediately taken remedial measures and the problems are expected to be resolved within a short period of time. We estimate that since end November, about 800 citizens (including case number 7916 and case number 8249) have failed to receive an SMS message containing their negative test results after receiving a free test provided by the Government, and there is no positive case among them. After the system is rectified, individual citizens will receive SMS messages containing the results of earlier tests automatically sent by the system. We extend apologies to the affected citizens.

At present, people will receive SMS messages containing their negative test results if they receive free testing at community testing centres, or obtain specimen bottles through private doctors, designated General Out-patient Clinics of the HA, post offices and MTR stations and return the

specimen samples for testing. We will continue to improve the system so that people receiving tests can be notified of the test results via SMS messages within 48 hours as far as possible.