



HONG KONG SECURITY ANALYSIS REPORT

AI-Assisted Open Source Intelligence Assessment

Analysis Period: April 25, 2026 - May 02, 2026

This report was produced using open-source intelligence analysis. The assessment is grounded in publicly available reporting and should be cross-referenced with primary sources. RSS feed articles are listed in the annex for reference.

Security Analysis Report: Hong Kong (April 25, 2026 - May 02, 2026)

Executive Summary

During the period of April 25 to May 02, 2026, Hong Kong's security landscape was primarily shaped by the continued tightening of its national security framework and a heightened focus on cybersecurity resilience. Amendments to the National Security Law's implementation rules, effective April 26, significantly expanded police powers, drawing international criticism. Concurrently, the city grappled with an intensifying cyber threat environment, prompting the operationalization of new critical infrastructure cybersecurity laws and a major regional counter-terrorism exercise. Diplomatic tensions with the United States persisted over Hong Kong's autonomy, while the city prepared for a massive influx of travelers during the Labour Day Golden Week, necessitating extensive border security measures. These developments underscore Hong Kong's evolving security posture, characterized by robust internal controls and a proactive stance against cyber and hybrid threats, amidst ongoing geopolitical scrutiny.

Key Security Developments

- Expanded National Security Law Powers

The 2026 Implementation Rules for Amending the Implementation Rules for Article 43 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) were gazetted and came into effect on April 26, 2026. These amendments significantly empower Hong Kong police to demand passwords or decryption methods for electronic devices from individuals under investigation for national security offenses. Refusal to comply can lead to up to one year imprisonment and a HK\$100,000 fine, while providing false information carries up to three years imprisonment and a HK\$500,000 fine. This move further expands state surveillance and investigative powers, impacting fundamental rights such as privacy and due process.

- Operationalization of Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity Law

Hong Kong's first dedicated cybersecurity law, the Protection of Critical Infrastructures (Computer Systems) Ordinance, which came into force on January 1, 2026, introduced a structured approach to cyber risk for operators of critical infrastructure across eight sectors, including energy, IT, transport, finance, and healthcare. An IT market update on April 29, 2026, highlighted the law's implications, requiring designated operators to establish Security Management Units, conduct annual risk assessments, and arrange biennial security audits. Serious incidents must now be reported within 12 hours, and other incidents within 48 hours, with penalties ranging from HK\$300,000 to HK\$5 million for non-compliance.

- Intensifying Cybersecurity Threat Landscape

The threat environment in Hong Kong continues to intensify, with a significant rise in cyberattacks. As of April 29, 2026, ransomware incidents were up 45% compared to 2025, affecting over 1,200 organizations and causing an estimated HK\$250 million in damages. Phishing attacks rose 38%, with more than 3,500 incidents in the first half of 2026. Supply-chain breaches surged 60%, AI-powered cyberattacks increased 55%, and cloud security breaches rose 40%, reinforcing the need for stronger security investment.

- Major Regional Counter-Terrorism Exercise "STEALTHNET"

The Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF), in collaboration with Interpol and police forces from Macao, Singapore, and South Korea, successfully concluded the Counter Cyber and Physical Terrorism Joint Exercise 2026, codenamed "STEALTHNET," on April 16-17, 2026. The exercise, involving over 380 participants, simulated a terrorist financing scenario followed by cross-border cyber and physical attacks against financial, aviation, and healthcare systems across the participating jurisdictions. This drill aimed to enhance counter-terrorism preparedness, intelligence sharing, coordinated rapid response, and regional cooperation against hybrid terrorist threats.

- Diplomatic Friction with the United States

On April 16, 2026, the US State Department released its 2026 Hong Kong Policy Act Report, which criticized Beijing and Hong Kong authorities for systematically degrading Hong Kong's political autonomy and civil liberties through the National Security Law (NSL) and the 2024 Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO). The report also highlighted alleged transnational repression of US citizens. In response, on April 17, 2026, the Commissioner's Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Hong Kong issued a strong condemnation, dismissing the report as "filled with lies and political bias" and accusing the US of attempting to "use Hong Kong to contain China."

- Labour Day Golden Week Border Security Preparations

Hong Kong's Immigration Department projected an unprecedented surge of approximately six million travelers passing through the city's land, sea, and air

checkpoints between May 1 and May 5, 2026, coinciding with the mainland's Labour Day Golden Week. To manage this, the department froze frontline leave, opened extra e-Channel kiosks, and established a temporary joint-command center inside Lo Wu station, coordinating with police, customs, and the MTR, as well as Shenzhen counterparts for real-time incident management and synchronized channel openings.

- Hong Kong Government Warns Against Exploiting Fire Incident

On May 2, 2026, the Hong Kong government issued a warning against "anti-China forces" attempting to exploit a deadly residential fire in Wang Fuk Court to disrupt the city. The Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government in Hong Kong stated that those attempting to exploit the incident would be brought to justice.

- Government Rejects Press Freedom Index Ranking

On May 2, 2026, the HKSAR government criticized the latest press freedom index, which ranked Hong Kong at 140 out of 180 countries, calling it a "smearing campaign" that disregarded the rule of law and twisted facts. The government reiterated that under the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance, all defendants have the right to a fair trial by an independent judiciary.

- Hong Kong as a "Super-connector" Amidst Geopolitical Shifts

On April 27, 2026, Financial Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po asserted that the ongoing restructuring of global geopolitics is not a threat but a catalyst for Hong Kong's evolution, enhancing its unique value as a "super-connector." Speaking at a summit, Chan emphasized Hong Kong's role in bridging different economies and markets as global supply chains become more regionalized.

Geopolitical Impact and Regional Dynamics

Hong Kong's security developments during this period continue to reflect its evolving status under the "one country, two systems" framework, increasingly aligning with mainland China's national security imperatives. The implementation of stricter national security laws, particularly the amendments to Article 43, has deepened concerns among Western powers, notably the United States, regarding the erosion of Hong Kong's autonomy and civil liberties. The US State Department's 2026 Hong Kong Policy Act Report, released just prior to the reporting period, explicitly detailed these concerns, leading to a sharp rebuke from Beijing's Commissioner's Office in Hong Kong. This ongoing diplomatic friction underscores the broader strategic competition between China and the US, with Hong Kong remaining a significant point of contention and a barometer for the state of their bilateral relations.

Regionally, Hong Kong's proactive stance on cybersecurity and counter-terrorism, exemplified by the "STEALTHNET" joint exercise with Macao, Singapore, and South Korea, demonstrates a commitment to regional security cooperation in specific domains. This cooperation, particularly in combating hybrid threats, suggests a pragmatic approach to shared security challenges, even as broader geopolitical tensions persist. However, the tightened national security framework also impacts Hong Kong's international standing as a business hub, with foreign companies and individuals facing increased scrutiny and legal risks, as highlighted by the US State Department and other analyses.

Financial Secretary Paul Chan's assertion that geopolitical shifts enhance Hong Kong's role as a "super-connector" reflects an official narrative aimed at reassuring international stakeholders and repositioning the city within a changing global economic order. This perspective emphasizes Hong Kong's continued relevance as a gateway between mainland China and global markets, particularly in the context of regionalized supply chains. However, the effectiveness of this "super-connector" role is increasingly intertwined with perceptions of its legal and political environment, which are heavily influenced by national security legislation and its enforcement. The balance between national security and maintaining an open, international environment remains a critical dynamic for Hong Kong's geopolitical trajectory.

Military and Defense Analysis

Hong Kong's defense is primarily the responsibility of the People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison, and as such, there are no independent military activities, defense policy shifts, acquisitions, or industry developments specific to Hong Kong reported during this period. The focus of security in Hong Kong remains predominantly on internal security, law enforcement, and counter-terrorism capabilities, managed by the Hong Kong Police Force and other local agencies.

The Counter Cyber and Physical Terrorism Joint Exercise 2026 ("STEALTHNET") is a significant indicator of Hong Kong's operational defense posture against non-traditional security threats. The exercise, which involved simulating complex cyber and physical attacks on critical infrastructure and terrorist financing scenarios, demonstrates a commitment to enhancing the city's resilience against hybrid threats. The participation of regional law enforcement agencies and cybersecurity bodies from Macao, Singapore, and South Korea highlights a strategy of strengthening cross-border cooperation and intelligence sharing to combat sophisticated, transnational security challenges. This collaborative approach is crucial for Hong Kong, given its status as a major international financial and transport hub, making it a potential target for such threats. The Commissioner's Operational Priorities for 2026 also underscore the ongoing emphasis on intelligence gathering and

counter-terrorism capabilities, including against domestic terrorism and self-radicalization.

Outlook and Forecast

Short-term trends (1-3 months):

In the immediate future, Hong Kong is expected to continue its rigorous enforcement of the amended National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance. The expanded police powers regarding electronic devices will likely be applied, leading to increased scrutiny of individuals and organizations deemed to pose national security risks. The cybersecurity landscape will remain a critical area of focus, with the Protection of Critical Infrastructures (Computer Systems) Ordinance driving compliance efforts and investment in cybersecurity measures across key sectors. The high volume of cross-border traffic, particularly during public holidays like the Labour Day Golden Week, will necessitate sustained efforts in border management and inter-agency coordination with mainland authorities. Diplomatic tensions with Western nations, particularly the US, are unlikely to abate, with continued criticism regarding human rights and autonomy in Hong Kong.

Critical flashpoints and risk areas:

Potential flashpoints include further arrests or prosecutions under the expanded national security laws, particularly involving foreign nationals or businesses, which could exacerbate international condemnation and impact foreign investment. The intensifying cyber threat environment, characterized by ransomware, phishing, and AI-powered attacks, poses a significant risk to Hong Kong's critical infrastructure and financial sector. Any major cybersecurity breach could have severe economic and reputational consequences. The ongoing narrative of "anti-China forces" attempting to exploit local incidents, as seen with the residential fire, suggests a continued vigilance against perceived internal threats and a potential for swift government responses to any perceived destabilizing activities.

Indicators to monitor:

Key indicators to monitor include the frequency and nature of arrests under national security legislation, particularly those involving individuals with international ties or from critical sectors. The effectiveness of the new cybersecurity regulations and the incidence of major cyberattacks will be crucial for assessing Hong Kong's digital resilience. Statements and actions from international bodies and foreign governments regarding Hong Kong's autonomy and rule of law will continue to shape its diplomatic standing. Economic indicators, such as foreign direct investment and the performance of key sectors, will reflect the impact of the security environment on business

confidence. Finally, any signs of social unrest or public dissent, however minor, and the government's response to them, will be important to observe.

Strategic recommendations:

For businesses and individuals operating in Hong Kong, it is strategically recommended to conduct thorough risk assessments regarding data privacy and digital security, particularly in light of the expanded police powers over electronic devices and the new cybersecurity ordinance. Compliance with local laws, including national security legislation, should be a top priority, alongside maintaining robust cybersecurity protocols. International organizations and governments should continue to monitor developments closely and engage in diplomatic efforts to advocate for human rights and the rule of law. Hong Kong authorities should prioritize transparent communication regarding the implementation of security laws and foster international cooperation on shared security challenges, such as cybersecurity and counter-terrorism, to mitigate negative perceptions and maintain its global connectivity.

Structured Assessment

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## ANNEX: COLLECTED ARTICLES BY SOURCE

### Source: HK Free Press

- [Chinese swimmer Sun Yang reports cyberbullying to police](#) (2026-05-02 04:39)

Three-time Chinese Olympic champion swimmer Sun Yang filed a police report after being subjected to “large-scale” cyberbullying, his team said Friday. Sun, 34, returned to competition in 2024 after a four-year ban for smashing vials of blood during a 2018 doping test, the circumstances of which he still disputes. His team said Friday that false [...]

- [‘Clearly me’ : Chinese AI drama accused of stealing faces](#) (2026-05-02 02:00)

By Sophia Xu and Purple Romero Christine Li is a model and influencer, but not an actor, so when she saw herself playing a cruel character in a Chinese microdrama she felt bewildered, then angry and afraid. The 26-year-old is one of two people who told AFP their likenesses were cast without consent in the [...]

- [China urges US to preserve ‘stability’ in ties, warns Taiwan is ‘risk point’](#) (2026-05-01 05:16)

China’s foreign minister on Thursday urged the United States to maintain “stability” between the two powers and warned that Taiwan posed the biggest risk, weeks before President Donald Trump visits Beijing. In a call with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that Beijing and Washington should “safeguard the hard-won stability” [...]

- [Taiwan economy grows at fastest pace since 1987](#) (2026-05-01 02:00)

Taiwan’s economy expanded at its fastest pace in nearly 39 years thanks to robust demand for artificial intelligence technology, data showed Thursday, despite concerns over the Middle East crisis. The island is a global powerhouse in the manufacturing of semiconductor chips, which power AI, and its economy has been growing at a fast clip in [...]

- [HKFP Lens: ‘Bodies in Motion, Bodies at Rest’ – Gareth Brown’s 19 years of dance photography](#) (2026-05-01 01:00)

Hong Kong photographer Gareth Brown has spent the past 19 years working on a personal project called “Bodies in Motion, Bodies at Rest” – using dance to showcase the city’s unique spots. For what he called a “very personal passion project,” he photographed ballerinas, contemporary and traditional dancers, as well as artistic swimmers and aerialists, [...]

- [‘Not good enough’ : Key points from gov’ t departments’ testimony at Tai Po fire inquiry](#) (2026-05-01 00:00)

In the second half of April, the public inquiry into the deadly Tai Po blaze heard from multiple government departments about authorities’ oversight during a major renovation at Wang Fuk Court before the tragedy unfolded. In the first 10 days of the hearings, residents gave damning testimony of how their complaints about potential fire hazards [...]

- [China’ s April factory activity expands despite Middle East war](#) (2026-04-30 09:46)

China’ s factory activity grew for a second straight month in April, official data showed Thursday, showing resilience despite surging energy prices and shipping disruption caused by the war in the Middle East. The manufacturing purchasing manager’ s index -- a key measure of industrial activity — was 50.3 in April, according to the National Bureau of [...]

- [Urban Renewal Authority did not consider bid-rigging risks at Wang Fuk Court, fire inquiry hears](#) (2026-04-30 08:02)

The authority that oversaw tender applications for the renovation work at the fire-hit Wang Fuk Court had not considered the risks of illegal tendering practices, a case manager has told an inquiry into the deadly blaze. Testifying on Thursday, Matthew Chan, a case manager for the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), said the semi-government body had [...]

- [Australia foreign minister says China agrees to collaborate on jet fuel exports](#) (2026-04-30 06:55)

Australia’ s foreign minister said Wednesday that China has agreed to work together to facilitate exports of jet fuel, in an attempt to ease supply disruptions caused by the war in the Middle East. The conflict and closure of the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world’ s crude oil transits, have caused fuel [...]

- [Hong Kong gov’ t steps up measures at ecological hotspots ahead of Golden Week visitor surge](#) (2026-04-30 06:23)

The Hong Kong government has introduced a string of measures to manage ecotourism hotspots in Sai Kung and Lantau Island, as a surge in visitors is expected during China’ s upcoming Golden Week holiday. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said in a statement on Wednesday that it would deploy drones and additional staff to [...]

- [Hong Kong remains at 140th on global press freedom index as NGO highlights Jimmy Lai’ s 20-year jail term](#) (2026-04-30 04:00)

Hong Kong remains at 140th place on Reporters Without Borders’ (RSF) global press freedom index of 180 countries and territories, with the NGO highlighting the 20-year sentence handed down to Apple Daily founder Jimmy Lai earlier this year. The press freedom watchdog released its annual index on Thursday, ahead of World Press Freedom Day on [...]

- [Hongkongers now face fines, jail time if caught carrying vapes in public](#) (2026-04-29 23:40)

Hongkongers caught carrying more than five vape pods or 100 heat sticks in public will face up to six months behind bars and a HK\$50,000 fine from Thursday. Cases involving smaller quantities will attract fines of HK\$3,000. The rules cover alternative tobacco products such as vapes, herbal cigarettes and electronic smoking products. They are part [...]

- [Diesel, LPG subsidies for Hong Kong public, commercial vehicles amid fuel price hikes](#) (2026-04-29 11:54)

The Hong Kong government has announced it will provide diesel and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) subsidies for public and commercial vehicles, amid higher fuel prices due to the ongoing Middle East war. The diesel subsidy of HK\$3 per litre will run for two months, from 12am on Thursday to 11.59pm on June 29, finance chief [...]

- [China to ban drone sales in capital over security fears](#) (2026-04-29 11:29)

China will ban the sale of drones in Beijing and require users to apply for permission for all flights in the capital under strict regulations that enter force on Friday. Officials have cited public security for the new rules, which also forbid bringing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or their core components into Beijing. E-commerce platforms [...]

- [Hong Kong Disneyland records 36% drop in profit despite higher hotel occupancy, guest spending](#) (2026-04-29 11:15)

Hong Kong Disneyland Resort has recorded a 36 per cent drop in net profit in its latest fiscal year, although other figures, including hotel occupancy rate and guests' per capita spending, trended upwards. The theme park announced its results for its 2024-25 fiscal year, ending in September 2025, on Monday. Amid rising costs, Disneyland saw [...]

- [Domestic worker arrested for allegedly putting 2 toddlers in dog cage](#) (2026-04-29 10:29)

A domestic worker has been arrested on suspicion of child abuse after allegedly putting her employer's two toddlers in a dog cage on two occasions. Police said they received a report on Tuesday from the children's mother, who alleged that the Indonesian domestic worker had put the two boys, aged two and three years, in [...]

- [US leads new call condemning China's actions in Panama Canal dispute](#) (2026-04-29 09:10)

The United States led a group of regional countries in calling China's actions during a dispute over the Panama Canal a "threat," prompting backlash from Beijing on Wednesday. Washington and Beijing accuse each other of seeking to control the Panama Canal, a vital trade link between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Panama took control of [...]

- [Authorities to 'look into' rubbish, other items in fire-hit Wang Fuk Court flat, official says](#) (2026-04-29 04:37)

A government official has said authorities will “look into” the situation after a resident at the fire-hit Wang Fuk Court found rubbish and other items that did not belong to his flat when he retrieved his belongings. The resident of Wang Cheong House, the first block hit by the blaze, told reporters on Tuesday that [...]

- [Hong Kong housing estate Richland Gardens draws controversy over hiring of non-local security guards](#) (2026-04-28 23:30)

Hong Kong residential estate Richland Gardens has sparked controversy after announcing the hiring of non-local workers as security guards. The owners’ corporation of Richland Gardens – a government-subsidised housing estate in Kowloon Bay – announced on Threads on Monday that its management company was training a group of “non-local security guards,” who started working on [...]

- [Hong Kong gov’ t to extend buyout plan to Wang Fuk Court block spared by fire – if 75% of owners agree](#) (2026-04-28 11:40)

Hong Kong authorities have said they will extend their buyout plan to include flats in the only Wang Fuk Court block unaffected by the deadly fire if three-quarters of the owners agree to sell their properties. Deputy Financial Secretary Michael Wong announced the plan at a press conference on Tuesday, around two months after the [...]

- [Political commentator to stand trial in Oct over disclosing nat. sec probe details](#) (2026-04-28 10:35)

A Hong Kong political commentator charged with disclosing details of a national security investigation will stand trial in October. Wong Kwok-ngon, known by his pen name Wong On-yin, appeared at the District Court on Tuesday. Judge Stanley Chan said the pre-trial review would take place behind closed doors on August 11, and the trial would [...]

- [‘Toothless tiger’ : Greenpeace criticises gov’ t measures at Hong Kong geopark island ahead of Golden Week holiday](#) (2026-04-28 07:34)

Greenpeace has called the Hong Kong government’ s planned measures at Sai Kung’ s Sharp Island “a toothless tiger,” as authorities predict a daily influx of 1,000 visitors to the ecological hotspot during China’ s Golden Week holiday in May. The environmental NGO issued a statement on Tuesday in response to the measures announced by the Agriculture, Fisheries [...]

- [Meta to backtrack acquisition of AI firm Manus after China block, report says](#) (2026-04-28 05:49)

Meta is preparing to backtrack its acquisition of AI startup Manus, the Wall Street Journal reported late Monday, after China banned the transaction citing national security concerns. Facebook owner Meta announced in December it had agreed to acquire Manus, an artificial intelligence agent created by a company founded in China but now based in Singapore. [...]

- [Chinese protesters demand Cambodia unfreeze accounts with scam-linked firm](#) (2026-04-28 04:49)

By Suy Se Waving their national flags, dozens of Chinese nationals protested outside Cambodia's central bank on Monday, demanding the unfreezing of accounts they opened with a financial services firm linked to cyberscamming. Some demonstrators wielded umbrellas and clashed with scores of local security personnel armed with batons, leaving at least two protesters bloodied. The [...]

- [Hong Kong anti-graft watchdog charges 2 men for inciting election boycott, blank votes in 'patriots only' legislative polls](#) (2026-04-28 03:58)

Hong Kong's anti-corruption watchdog has charged two men accused of urging others on social media to boycott and cast blank votes in last year's legislative elections. The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), which oversees Hong Kong's election legislation, said in a Monday statement that the two men, aged 38 and 63, were charged with alleged [...]

- [Hong Kong's CLP Power increases fuel surcharge for 2 consecutive months](#) (2026-04-27 23:30)

Hong Kong's CLP Power will increase its electricity fuel surcharge for the second consecutive month amid rising oil prices, bringing the total electricity tariff to 141.6 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh). CLP Power, one of the city's two electricity companies, announced on Wednesday that it would increase the fuel cost adjustment starting from May 1 to [...]

- [Mainland Chinese tourist rescued after falling into sea near Clear Water Bay](#) (2026-04-27 12:39)

A mainland Chinese tourist was rescued after falling into the sea while reportedly taking photos at a lookout point near Clear Water Bay. Police said they received a report just before 11am on Sunday that a woman lost her footing near the Fat Tong Mun Lighthouse and fell into the sea. She was saved by [...]

- [Hong Kong police arrest 9 in joint int'l crackdown on online child porn](#) (2026-04-27 12:17)

Hong Kong police have arrested nine men in a joint operation with law enforcement agencies in six other jurisdictions, targeting the production, use and distribution of child pornography online. The city's police force said on Monday that Operation Hurdler arrested a total of 326 people in March and April in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, [...]

- [China blocks Meta's acquisition of AI startup Manus](#) (2026-04-27 10:02)

China has blocked Meta's acquisition of AI startup Manus, the top economic planning body said Monday, after a regulatory review that reportedly also saw Beijing restrict two co-founders

from leaving the country. Facebook owner Meta had agreed to acquire Manus, an artificial intelligence agent created by a company founded in China but now based in [...]

- [Buildings Department did not conduct flame tests on Wang Fuk Court scaffold nets, fire probe hears](#) (2026-04-27 08:25)

The Buildings Department (BD) did not conduct flammability tests on the scaffold nets covering Wang Fuk Court before the housing estate was struck by a deadly fire last year, an official has told a public inquiry into the blaze. The BD's assistant director for mandatory building inspection, Karen Cheung, testified on Monday that her department [...]

- [China threatens countermeasures if EU enacts 'Made in Europe' plan](#) (2026-04-27 06:30)

Beijing slammed on Monday an EU plan aimed to bolster the bloc's industries against fierce competition from China, vowing countermeasures if it is enacted. The EU unveiled in March new "Made in Europe" rules for companies trying to access public funds in strategic sectors including cars, green tech and steel, obliging firms to meet minimum [...]

- [Over 201,000 moviegoers snap up \\$30 tickets on Hong Kong's Cinema Day](#) (2026-04-27 04:30)

More than 201,000 people took part in Hong Kong's annual Cinema Day on Saturday, enjoying discounted HK\$30 tickets at theatres citywide. The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau hailed the event as a "great success." In a Facebook post on Sunday, the bureau said that this year's Cinema Day drew 201,519 moviegoers, with 1,694 screenings held [...]

- [Tai Po fire: Residents return to retrieve belongings, take final photos and mourn neighbours](#) (2026-04-26 23:30)

Wang Fuk Court residents continued to return to their fire-scorched housing estate to collect personal belongings over the weekend. One family said they planned to take "one last photo" inside their flat, while a couple brought flowers to mourn a neighbour who died in the blaze. Residents of Wang Cheong House, the tower first hit [...]

- [Exiled Tibetans to elect government in vote condemned by China](#) (2026-04-26 06:23)

By Tenzin Woeden Tibetans outside Chinese control vote on Sunday for a government-in-exile, an election of heightened significance as they brace for an inevitable, eventual, future without their revered spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama. The India-based Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) — condemned by China as "nothing but a separatist political group" — is a key [...]

- [Central Asian gas giant Turkmenistan deepens reliance on China](#) (2026-04-26 02:00)

In the desert expanse of Turkmenistan, Chinese engineers are hard at work at the vast Galkynysh gas field — a mega project that is deepening the closed Central Asian state's already extensive ties with Beijing. Energy-rich Turkmenistan, one of the world's most

reclusive and sealed-off states, has stated its desire to diversify its exports towards [...]

- [Ramen, nightlife and love: A Japanese entrepreneur's 55 years in Hong Kong](#) (2026-04-26 00:30)

Ippei-an Ramen & Bar, a Japanese restaurant that has been in operation for 42 years, is located in what people may say is one of Hong Kong's worst locations. Energy Plaza, a commercial building in Tsim Sha Tsui East, is no longer a lively spot. Quite a number of restaurants have shut down over the [...]

- [2 Chinese pandas headed to US zoo](#) (2026-04-25 07:13)

Two giant pandas from China are headed to Atlanta on a new 10-year conservation deal. Pandas Ping Ping, a male, and Fu Shuang, a female, will live at Zoo Atlanta, China Wildlife Conservation Association said in a statement Friday. The organization signed the research agreement with the United States zoo last year, it said, noting [...]

- [Chinese EV carmakers aim to build up presence in Europe](#) (2026-04-25 02:00)

By Laurence Benhamou Chinese carmakers have quickly built up their presence in the lucrative European auto market, buoyed by technological advances their competitors are trying to copy, and analysts say their next step is to begin producing locally. Largely unknown in the continent three years ago, brands including BYD, Chery, Geely and XPeng achieved a [...]

- [Are Hong Kong's new national security rules for restaurants clear enough?](#) (2026-04-25 02:00)

The Hong Kong government's attitude to the rule of law is interestingly ambiguous. It wishes to claim credit for being a law-abiding government, but it does not want to sacrifice for this purpose the achievement of other desires. This implicit conflict is nicely wrapped up in the matter of restaurant licences. In any sensible jurisdiction, [...]

- [HKFP Lens: Hong Kong laundry on streets – where private meets public](#) (2026-04-25 01:30)

Hong Kong is famous for its tiny, cramped living spaces. Many flats lack balconies, making drying laundry a major challenge. As winter gives way to warmer months, many lower-income families hang their garments and bedding in outdoor public areas on sunny days. Some also take food items like dried tangerine peels, salted fish, and dried [...]

## Source: RTHK English News

- [Public vaping ban 'won't dim HK allure to tourists'](#) (2026-05-02 03:56)

The Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office said on Saturday this week's expansion of the smoking ban would not deter tourists from visiting Hong Kong. As of April 30, the use of alternative smoking products – including e-cigarettes, heated tobacco products, and herbal cigarettes – in

public spaces is banned. Public possession alone brings a HK\$3,000 penalty. More serious breaches, including the importation or sale of these items, mean a fine of up to HK\$50,000 and up to six months in jail. As of 5pm yesterday, the office's inspectors had conducted 216 operations and issued four penalty notices. Speaking on an RTHK programme, control office head Manny Lam pointed out that the ban on the importation of alternative smoking products had been in force for four years and that such regulations are not unique to Hong Kong. "If we look at the whole world, more than 30 countries and regions have imposed similar laws, including Singapore and Thailand, which rolled out such regulations in 2014 and 2018, respectively," he said. "We have not seen any impact on their tourist numbers following such bans. Lam said his office had been informing tourists about the ban since the beginning of the year. He said this involved collaborating with Customs, the Tourism Board, the Travel Industry Authority, and airlines. As for the January 1 expansion of the smoking ban to within three metres of doorways of places like hospitals and government clinics, schools, residential care homes and child-care centres, Lam said more than 11,000 inspections had been carried out in the first quarter. They resulted in more than 2,100 fixed-penalty notices being issued, including 23 for smoking in the newly stipulated areas. Edited by Robert Kemp

- [Uber says acquiring e-hail taxi startup FlyTaxi](#) (2026-05-01 21:26)

Uber says it is acquiring the Hong Kong e-hail taxi start-up FlyTaxi. Launched 13 years ago, locally-built FlyTaxi was one of the first meter taxi platforms in Hong Kong. In a statement, Uber said FlyTaxi would continue to operate as normal and there would be no change for drivers and riders using the FlyTaxi or Uber apps. It said the move was part of its commitment to growing the taxi industry and providing greater economic opportunities to drivers. FlyTaxi's founder Simon Siu said joining forces with Uber was a proud milestone. Edited by Robert Kemp

- [Labour of lore as tourists hit all the high spots](#) (2026-05-01 08:58)

Mainlanders began flocking to Hong Kong on Friday as the five-day Labour Day Golden Week holiday kicked off. Many of them visited the former Yau Ma Tei Police Station, saying they wanted to experience the historical landmark in person after having seen it used as a location in local films. A woman surnamed Li, who is from Chengdu, said she was thrilled as she enjoys the dramatic fare that Hong Kong films conjure up on the silver screen. "I have only been seen [the building] on screen and never come close to it," she said. "But now that I'm here, it's like all those scenes – those exciting, thrilling movies, the chase scenes with all the handsome police officers – are being replayed in my mind," she said. Another tourist said the former police station had been popular as a tourist spot among travellers online so she came to take photographs of the landmark fixture in Hong Kong's film history. With some heading for some of the more popular tourist hotspots such as Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong Disneyland and Ocean Park, the slightly more intrepid went to Sai Kung's Sharp Island for the unique natural scenery and rich coral outcrops of Unesco Global Geopark. "I am from Shanghai and I like the outdoors a lot, but there is no such unique spot that encompasses the sea and mountain there, and it takes a few hours to drive to go somewhere distant, so I think it is quite convenient

here,” a woman surnamed Shen said. Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department staff will be deployed in strength to ensure that the 1,000 mainland visitors expected to head thereon all five days of the holiday are on their best behaviour. They will also implement various measures, such as distributing leaflets to boost environmental protection awareness as well as guiding kayakers and snorkellers in as well as out of the water in some instances. A woman surnamed Wang from Shenyang told RTHK that the measures are useful, as not all people are aware of the right thing to do in certain circumstances. She added that violators could be fined to ensure a deterrent effect. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Quota scheme set for mega bridge travel between SARs](#) (2026-05-01 08:43)

All permanent residents as well as companies registered in Hong Kong can soon apply to use the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge to travel by car between the two special administrative regions. This came as the Transport Department said on Friday that an open category for these two categories of applicants would be set up as part of an attempt to make cross-boundary travel more efficient. There will be a quota of 200 for applicants in each category when applications open on Thursday. “These new open quotas will provide additional convenience for Hong Kong residents to drive to Macao for work, business, visiting families or sightseeing, thereby strengthening ties between the two places,” a spokesman said. Currently, only permanent residents and firms meeting specific requirements can apply. Besides these, another quota of 1,000 – half of them new and the rest reallocated – will be set aside for existing eligible applicants in the upcoming round. Under the quota scheme, drivers are entitled to multiple entries into Macao using the mega bridge starting from mid-July until it expires in 2029. However, the department stressed, current holders of quotas issued after September 2023 are not eligible to apply this time around. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Early queues in Wang Fuk race to retrieve belongings](#) (2026-05-01 08:01)

Long queues formed at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po in the early hours of Friday as more people returned to retrieve belongings they were forced to leave behind when the deadly inferno tore through most of their residential estate. In the latest phased arrangement, five floors in Wang Tai House and 10 floors in Wang Kin House were opened up. By just before 9am, dozens of people had lined up outside Kwong Fuk Community Hall to register and receive the protective gear they had to don before they were allowed to go into the buildings. Many were seen toting large red-white-blue canvas bags, pulling handcarts or wheeling suitcases. A woman surnamed Chan who lived in Wang Tai House, one of two buildings that were severely damaged in the blaze, said she hoped to retrieve what mattered most to her family. “I definitely want to retrieve valuables and sentimental items like photos,” she said. “My mother will not be going up with me, but my older sister and two friends will. My mother is already 85 years old, so walking up 14 floors is way too difficult.” A woman surnamed Kwan said she owned three high-floor units in Wang Kin House, which she had been using for both self-occupation and rental. She said she had managed to put the fire incident out of her mind for a while but that her mood turned heavy again when she learned she could finally go upstairs. “Most important is that I can get my

son's photos and certifications. I also want to grab my own awards from work," Kwan said. "I heard from my social worker that it is a good thing if we don't get advance photos to give us an idea of our unit's condition. If we don't get photos, it means the condition of our home isn't too bad. "I hope the condition of Wang Kin House is better than what we expect it to be." A man surnamed Siu, who had been living in Wang Kin House, said his parents were among the first batch of owners and that their greatest wish had been to move back into their unit. He added that though his father is reluctant to part with the flat, he knows he has to let go. Siu also said the family believes the government has been very considerate of their situation. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Employers 'missing out on MPF offset subsidies'](#) (2026-05-01 07:58)

Lawmaker Lam Chun-sing has called on the government to step up its publicity promotional efforts for a subsidy scheme that helps employers deal with the abolition of the mandatory provident fund offsetting arrangement a year ago. His remarks came after the government said it had received more than 20,000 applications for the subsidy that aims to assist employers to adapt to the policy change and processed more than 16,000 of them. Speaking on an RTHK programme on Friday, Lam, who chairs the Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions, said the number of applications was lower than expected. "Some employers may not be aware of the scheme," he said. "Even if they are, they may not know the application procedure and just skip it thinking it only involves a small amount of money. "I hope the government can enhance its promotion to small and medium enterprises. "Since the government has reserved HK\$33.2 billion for subsidies over 25 years – and only disbursed HK\$40 million so far – I think this resource should be used to support SMEs." Lam also said many of the applications had been lodged by employers in the construction and catering sectors. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Cabbies, fares told go extra mile on e-payment options](#) (2026-05-01 07:33)

The Taxi Drivers and Operators Association has called on cabbies and passengers to avoid potential confusion over electronic payments by communicating clearly with each other. The call on Friday came a month to the day after it became mandatory for taxi drivers to provide at least two e-payment options. The Transport Department has received 65 complaints as of April 17, with the grouses mainly about cabbies failing to offer electronic payment methods and certain platforms charging passengers transaction fees. Speaking on an RTHK radio programme, association secretary-general Wong Tai-hoi said most of the complaints arose as a result of a lack of communication. "For example, I may provide two electronic payment options, but a passenger may use something else," he said. "[They would say] why can't you provide, say, the credit card payment option, why don't you have it? Aren't you supposed to provide it?" Wong pointed out that even though there are stickers on taxis showing which e-payment methods are available, drivers working different shifts might offer different options without changing the stickers. He urged drivers to make it a practice to make it clear to customers when they board which two payment options they offer. Passengers, Wong added, should at the same

time also keep cash in hand in spite of the availability of e-payment options, Wong added. He also pointed out that while Octopus Card Hong Kong has waived handling fees for cabbies using its app for business purposes, it is uncertain whether the arrangement is permanent. The cost of using e-payment methods, Wong stressed, is very high for drivers. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Four people fined on day one of expanded smoking ban](#) (2026-05-01 07:30)

Four fixed-penalty notices were issued on Thursday, the first day Hong Kong's new tobacco-control regulations effectively banned the use of alternative smoking products in public places, according to the head of the Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office. As of April 30, a total ban on alternative smoking products – including e-cigarettes, heated tobacco products and herbal cigarettes – has been in place in public spaces. Offenders caught possessing, using, importing or selling these items face penalties of up to HK\$50,000 and six months in jail, while public possession alone can result in a HK\$3,000 fine. Speaking on an RTHK radio programme on Friday, Manny Lam, head of the control office, said that as of 5pm on the first day of enforcement, his office had issued four penalty notices under the relevant law. He added that inspections would continue across various locations, particularly in areas with high pedestrian traffic. Lam noted that the low number of violations was largely expected. "This is largely in line with our expectations," he said. "First, these products such as e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products have already had their import, sale, promotion and manufacturing banned for four years. "In fact, there is no legal way to obtain these products in society." Lam also credited public awareness campaigns for the low number of infractions. "Given our extensive publicity work recently, we expected that the number of these penalty notices issued would not be very serious," he said. Lam emphasised that ongoing publicity efforts aim not only to encourage public understanding and compliance with the law but also to raise awareness about the dangers of alternative smoking products. "Publicity work is never perfect or completely sufficient, but even though we have done a lot, we will keep doing it," he said. "We hope that through publicity, besides helping people understand and comply with the law, the public will also truly understand what the hazards of these products are." Lam reiterated that alternative smoking products contain nicotine, are not "harm-reduction" tools, and do not help people quit smoking. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Two Sai Kung cabbies nabbed for allegedly overcharging](#) (2026-05-01 02:45)

Two taxi drivers have been arrested in Sai Kung in an undercover operation for alleged overcharging a day prior to the start of the Labour Day Golden Week. The men, aged 43 and 66, were suspected of charging about HK\$300 and HK\$540, about twice the original fare. They were also alleged to have failed to ensure their taxi driving licences and meters were openly displayed. Police said their taxis had been impounded for further investigations. Last Saturday, Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism Rosanna Law said authorities were determined to clamp down on taxi drivers' misbehaviour, including overcharging. The government would not tolerate any misconduct that affects the SAR's tourism reputation, she added. Offenders face a

fine of up to HK\$10,000 and six months in prison for a first conviction for overcharging.

Edited by Robert Kemp

- [Public hospitals set to extend non-acute ward visiting](#) (2026-04-30 23:10)

Visiting hours will be extended in around 20 percent of wards at public hospitals by the end of July to allow for greater flexibility, the Hospital Authority announced. For paediatric wards, visiting hours will be extended from four hours to 24-hour, around-the-clock access. As for rehabilitation, convalescent, infirmary, palliative and hospice wards, visiting time will increase from four hours to nine hours. However, there will be no extension for acute wards, where visiting time remains capped at four hours per day. The limit of two visitors per patient at any one time also remains unchanged. Dr Danny Tong, the authority's chief manager of nursing, said that the authority is "playing it safe" before considering further extensions. "In acute settings, the clinical condition is not stabilised yet. And we have to have the proper, accurate diagnosis and treatment plan," he said. There is also an established mechanism to make special visiting arrangements for patients with specific care needs in acute wards, he added. Citing the experience of several public hospitals that have already extended visiting time, Dr Tong stressed that extended hours actually reduce the workload for frontline nurses. "For the traditional or prevailing arrangement, we have to fix the period of time to facilitate visiting, like two hours in the noontime and two hours in the evening. And then it creates a scenario that all visitors sort of pack into this narrow visiting time period," he said. "From our experience, it's like diverting the workload, spread evenly in the wider window period. And that's why, from our experience, there's no specific pressure, so in case that we have to make a very stringent or specific manpower arrangement to entertain this kind of request." The Kowloon Central Cluster will be the first to fully implement the changes on May 2, followed by the New Territories West Cluster on May 4. The authority expects the new arrangements to be in effect territory-wide by the end of July. Edited by Robert Kemp

- [Govt hopes to amend laws amid fuel smuggling rise](#) (2026-04-30 11:15)

Secretary for Security Chris Tang has announced that the government is actively amending laws in response to a sharp rise in illegal fuel smuggling activities. Speaking to reporters after a meeting of the Fight Crime Committee on Thursday, Tang said that the proposed changes are designed to close existing legal loopholes by raising penalties and clarifying the criminal liability of buyers. Under the new proposals, the maximum fine for selling illegal fuel would be increased from HK\$200,000 to HK\$3 million, and the maximum prison term would be raised from one year to three years – a move Tang said would serve as a stronger deterrent. In addition, authorities plan to expand the enforcement powers of the Fire Services Department. The department, he said, would be granted arrest powers in cases involving illegal refuelling, as well as the authority to stop, search and seize vehicles to improve enforcement efficiency. Tang also noted that the government is studying the legal liability of those who purchase illegal fuel. "The current provisions mainly target sellers. Buyers are not subject to any legal restrictions," he said. "In the absence of legal constraints on the demand side, this makes such crimes more

likely to occur. We hope to clearly establish the criminal liability of buyers to plug this loophole."The security chief revealed that authorities have received 656 complaints related to illegal refuelling – twice the amount compared to the same period last year. The number of cases in urban areas, he said, has surged from ten in the first quarter of last year to 61 in the same period this year, a rise of 5.1 times. Tang highlighted several dangerous incidents in densely populated areas. "For example, a mobile illegal refuelling station in Cheung Sha Wan caused a vehicle fire that damaged several cars in February and led to two injuries," he said. "In March this year, in To Kwa Wan, we raided an illegal refuelling station located in a street-level shop, seizing approximately 850 litres of fuel. If that amount of fuel were ignited and exploded, the destructive force would be equivalent to 1,000 pounds of explosives." "The location is near residential buildings and even has an elderly home. If an accident were to occur, the consequences would be unimaginable." The government aims to submit a draft bill to the Legislative Council by the end of this year. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Authorities to crack down on illegal tour guides](#) (2026-04-30 09:59)

The Travel Industry Authority (TIA) on Thursday said it will "severely" crack down on illegal tour guides during the mainland's Golden Week holiday that runs from May 1 to May 5. In a statement, the authority noted it has already conducted inspections and publicity campaigns, alongside the Immigration Department, at various tourism hotspots over the past two days. It said they have visited popular areas such as the West Kowloon Cultural District and the Avenue of Stars to distribute leaflets urging people not to follow unlicensed tour guides. It reminded tourists to check on the business qualifications and licensing status of an agency before embarking on any of its tours. It also called on visitors to file a report to either the authority or the police if they are treated unfairly by merchants or encounter suspected illegal tour guides. The TIA also noted that unlicensed tour guides face fines of HK\$50,000 and up to a year in prison. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [URA not involved in Wang Fuk project consultant hiring](#) (2026-04-30 09:31)

The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) did not have any role in the tendering or hiring of a project consultant and registered inspector for Wang Fuk Court, an independent committee probing last November's deadly inferno at the estate heard on Thursday. Case manager Matthew Chan, the first URA official to testify, told the inquiry that he had been following up on the tendering for renovation works at the Tai Po estate since June 2019. He explained that the authority's role was limited to hosting the tender advertisement on its website and consolidating a summary table once the management committee received bids. However, Chan testified that the URA would not offer opinions on the tender evaluation criteria, to remain neutral. The committee's lead counsel, Victor Dawes, suggested that bid-rigging often involves manipulating evaluation criteria and described the authority's passive stance as a "major loophole." Dawes also pointed out a significant "discrepancy" in the bids for the project consultant role at Wang Fuk Court. The prices ranged from over HK\$2 million down to just HK\$45,000. Chan noted that some management committees consider price as the sole selection

factor. He called the price gap a "normal industry practice" where less experienced firms underbid to gain a foothold in the market. Dawes also said that Hau Wa-kin, the director of the project's main contractor Prestige Construction and Engineering, was related to at least five companies that submitted bids for construction works at Wang Fuk Court. Questioned whether the URA was aware of these connections, Chan said the authority had relied on reports provided by the project consultant, adding that the authority did not conduct its own scrutiny. A director at the URA, Peter Wong, also testified and conceded that the authority is currently unable to take any action if a project consultant and contractors collude to carry out unnecessary works. But he stressed that a strengthened Smart Tender system will be launched later this year, featuring a new background check mechanism to assist management committees in evaluating tenders. Wong added that under the updated system, the URA will take a more active role by conducting its own tender evaluations and then picking the three best bids for residents to choose from. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Public transport drivers sit easier with LPG subsidy](#) (2026-04-30 04:54)

The Motor Transport Workers General Union said on Thursday that a plan to subsidise certain sectors running on liquefied petroleum gas would go a long way with drivers tasked with serving the public. Taxis, public minibuses and school buses are expected to get a subsidy of 50 Hong Kong cents per litre by the end of next month, not long after the ceiling price per litre of LPG is hiked up at dedicated filling stations by more than HK\$1 starting in May. The general union's first vice chairman, Chong Wing-tak, told an RTHK radio programme that drivers in these public transport sectors faced having to pay about HK\$30 more per shift per vehicle. "[The increment] isn't that great if you calculate it on a daily basis. It's only about HK\$30 a day. On a monthly basis, however, that's about HK\$1,000," he said. "That means drivers would be taking a monthly pay cut. As you know, taxi and minibus drivers are self-employed." Secretary for Transport and Logistics Mable Chan has said the decision to offer an LPG subsidy is expected to benefit operators of around 16,900 taxis, 3,440 minibuses and 170 school buses. The government's swift action in this regard, Chong added, can alleviate drivers' burden by half. He also hopes the two-month subsidy can be extended if LPG price continues on an upward trajectory. Chong suggested the administration consider setting up a fuel surcharge mechanism for drivers in these sectors in the long run. The move comes in the wake of a HK\$3 per litre subsidy for vessels and commercial vehicles that run on diesel, with the relief measure starting on Thursday and ending on June 29. With firms having to submit a weekly report to the authorities to ensure that they do not increase the charges that they levy on the public while receiving the subsidy, the deputy general manager of a diesel distribution firm, Janet Lo, said the requirement has brought an extra workload. This is because they have to compile the information needed within a short time, and they also have to make sure that their customers are not using the fuel outside Hong Kong or reselling it, she added. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Inspections begin for people using vapes, e-cigarettes](#) (2026-04-30 04:29)

New tobacco control regulations targeting the use of alternative smoking products in public areas took effect on Thursday, with offenders facing a fine of up to HK\$50,000 and six months in jail. Anyone found with vapes, e-cigarettes or heated tobacco will be issued with a HK\$3,000 fixed penalty notice. Those found carrying large quantities of such products, such as more than five units of cigarette capsules or 100 units of heat sticks, will face criminal prosecution. The head of the Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office, Manny Lam, led spot checks in Admiralty, where two residents were caught carrying heated tobacco. Speaking to reporters afterwards, Lam said the office will enhance inspections over the next fortnight, specifically targeting crowded areas and commercial districts. “When our Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office inspectors find anyone possessing, smoking, or carrying e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products, we will issue the fixed penalty notice without prior warning,” he said. “We will review our tactics in the early phase of our inspection. We will conduct more inspections wearing uniforms with the purpose to enhance the awareness of the public about the new legislation.” Lam added that there would be no leeway for overseas visitors, saying the office will enhance publicity efforts to ensure tourists are aware of the rules. He noted that the sale or import of such products has been prohibited since 2022 and stressed that similar bans in places such as Thailand have not deterred tourists from visiting. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- ['Over HK\\$30m needed to repair Wang Chi House'](#) (2026-04-29 13:28)

The current property manager of Wang Fuk Court estimates that repair works at Wang Chi House – the only building at the estate in Tai Po not damaged by the inferno last November – will cost more than HK\$30 million and take at least nine months to complete. Hop On Management, which was appointed by the government to handle follow-up work for residents, added that it will hold a briefing for homeowners early next month to explain the details of the required repairs. In a statement published on Wednesday, the company noted that about two-thirds of the building's exterior walls require further waterproofing to rectify issues from renovations carried out before the fire. “With the rainy season approaching, there is a risk of water leakage and safety hazards in these areas. It is necessary to set up scaffolding or suspended working platforms to handle them,” the statement read. The company also noted that additional time is required to construct emergency vehicle access routes to comply with fire safety regulations. “These works may involve private land ownership, and additional time may be required for completion,” it added. There is a need to inspect and repair vital infrastructure, the company said, such as the fire service system, drinking water tanks, and public pipelines. Meanwhile, the government said that a total of 111 households from Wang Tai House and Wang Kin House returned to their homes on Wednesday and spent around two hours and six minutes on average inside the buildings. There were five cases where police assistance was requested involving suspected lost property, such as watches, jewellery, cash and gold. Officers were able to find the missing belongings in one of the cases. One resident also sought help from authorities after feeling unwell. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Green agenda, market potential attract firms to China](#) (2026-04-29 08:53)

Foreign firms from around the world are showcasing their innovative products in Hong Kong in a bid to use the city as a launchpad into the mainland market. Some 5,600 exhibitors from more than 30 countries and regions have been taking part in seven "mega" trade fairs in Hong Kong. Around 15 percent of them, or 820 exhibitors, focus on green and sustainable products, along with the use of innovative materials in compliance with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards. Knishka Bahety, chief executive of Indian decoration and kitchenware firm, Crown Decor, said he hopes to secure more buyers from Asia, especially China, partly because of the country's growing emphasis on the environment. "One of our products are made out of laminated boards, which is antimicrobial and has all the properties of eco-friendliness. Definitely this is 'the product of the future'," he told RTHK. "Predominantly, we are very strong in the European market, but now with the [Iran war] we are looking for other markets so that we can spread our risks. "China is a big market. And of course, we do export one of our brands to the mainland, and now we plan to do this even more for the China and other Asian markets," he said. He added his firm, which joined the fairs in the SAR for the first time, hoped to widen its global reach as part of its strategy to hedge against trade disruptions. "The reason for us coming here is also because all the international customers from various parts of the world are here, so we decided to be here to reach maximum countries at this place," he said. Separately, Mohamed Alayat, founder of Dubai-based company, Alpha Art, which focuses on corporate gifts such as tech-enabled drinkware, was keen to explore the mainland market due to its "huge" consumer potential. "We have inquiries before with Huawei, and they are talking about [orders of] five million pieces, we never find this kind of numbers anywhere. The China market is a huge market," he said. The trade fairs, organised by the Trade Development Council, cover a wide range of industries, including houseware, fashion, printing and packaging, premium gifts, and intellectual properties. First-time exhibitors include those from Finland, Germany, Iceland, the United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, as well as India. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Auditor finds eye-watering expenses at Tai Po hostel](#) (2026-04-29 08:31)

An audit report has found that a government-funded youth hostel in Tai Po spent excessively on furniture and equipment. Under the Youth Hostel Scheme introduced in the 2011–12 Policy Address, the government pays for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to construct youth hostels, which they then operate on a self-financing basis. In a report published on Wednesday, the Audit Commission noted that an NGO procured 78 thermo ventilators at total cost of HK\$903,000 for a hostel in Tai Po. However, audit research revealed that the retail price for the supply, delivery, and installation of the same model was between HK\$1,900 and HK\$2,300. In response, the NGO explained that the higher prices it paid were driven by several factors, including the requirement for certified installation personnel on construction sites, insurance, and a strict 21-day installation window. The report also highlighted that the hostel procured 76 toilet paper holders at a unit price of HK\$3,390 and 46 bathroom soap dispenser holders priced at HK\$2,390 each, but they were never put in use. The NGO explained that the toilet paper holders were found to be too difficult to use and that the soap dispenser holders could cause safety hazards. The commission also noted that the government had failed to deliver the 3,000

hostel units it promised the Legislative Council in 2012, as only around 1,300 were completed as of December last year. The commission urged the government to review the target of 3,000 units and speed up the implementation of approved youth hostel projects as far as practicable. The administration was also urged to strengthen controls over the procurement of furniture and equipment at youth hostels, for example by boosting competition as far as possible when there is a need to conduct restricted tendering. Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs Alice Ma agreed with the audit recommendations. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Govt to offer diesel subsidy starting Apr 30](#) (2026-04-29 07:24)

Financial Secretary Paul Chan on Wednesday announced that the two-month subsidy for vessels and commercial vehicles running on diesel would start on Thursday. It will hand out the HK\$3 per litre subsidy to designated oil companies and distributors. Environment minister Tse Chin-wan said the government would ensure that motorists would directly benefit and not pay more than they need to, as oil firms and distributors must submit reports to authorities every week on information such as the sources of the fuel they purchase, sales volume and prices.

“After the scheme, they have to conduct an independent audit to verify all those information. Because the government, we know the price of the oil they buy from external sources, therefore [for] all the changes in the oil prices, we can monitor and we know what are the changes,” he said. “Therefore, with the reporting and the auditing system, we are very confident the oil companies will not be able to [counteract] the subsidy.” Meanwhile, the government is also considering a HK\$0.50 per litre subsidy next month for taxis, minibuses and school buses which run on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). The financial secretary said this was due to the fact that the ceiling price per litre of auto-LPG at dedicated filling stations would rise by more than a dollar starting in May. Secretary for Transport and Logistics Mable Chan said the decision to offer an LPG subsidy is expected to benefit about 16,900 taxis, 3,440 minibuses and 170 school buses. “Public minibuses and taxis are two important components of our public transport system. On the other hand, we have also minibuses providing student service,” the official said. “In order to ensure that they will continue to maintain a steady service for the general members of the public, we will deploy internal resources within the government in order to provide the subsidy for petroleum suppliers companies.” The potential subsidy for LPG transport vehicles is expected to cost around HK\$38 million, she added, and would run for about two months. The details would be announced in due course, she said. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Lawmakers approve budget bill as FS explains moves](#) (2026-04-29 06:47)

Financial Secretary Paul Chan on Wednesday dismissed concerns from some lawmakers that the financial cornerstone of the SAR will be shaken by the government's plan to use HK\$150 billion from the Exchange Fund for infrastructure spending. This came as lawmakers approved the budget bill, with some of them raising questions about the funds transfer plan. Chan described as "scaremongering" comments that issuing bonds for Northern Metropolis development would create financial crises for future generations. "[It would only be

irresponsible] if we don't invest in the Northern Metropolis and create greater capacity for Hong Kong, seizing the opportunities to snatch companies and get them to set up here to develop our innovation and technology and a vigorous I&T ecosystem," he told lawmakers before the bill's passage. "It would only be irresponsible if we don't diversify the economic structure of Hong Kong and make the future economy more resilient, and allow young people and future generations to have more, and better, job opportunities." Chan stressed that the one-off transfer – to be carried out over two years – amounts to less than four percent of the overall reserves of the Exchange Fund. He added that the HK\$150 billion will come from the HK\$330 billion annual surplus, to support infrastructure development in the metropolis, as well as other projects. The minister also rejected arguments that the government is using money raised through bond issuance to cover other bond debts. He said the administration is issuing relatively shorter bonds of three to seven years, because doing so will mean lower interest commitments. He said given the market confidence in purchasing the bonds – due to the SAR government's sound financial situation – officials plan to keep issuing them. Chan went on to say that the administration plans to focus on developing artificial intelligence in Hong Kong to boost high-quality development of the local economy. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [HKO urged to set target date for 14-day forecasts](#) (2026-04-29 05:27)

Hong Kong's auditor has called on the observatory to set a concrete timetable for extending its nine-day weather forecast to cover two weeks and to step up public education of its tropical cyclone warning system. In a report published on Wednesday, the Audit Commission noted that there have been various trial operations in weather monitoring and forecasting, including an extension of the outlook period from nine to 14 days for internal reference. The commission noted that the forecaster "had not set a concrete timeframe for the trial operation of extension of the weather forecast period from 9 days to 14 days". "[The observatory] needs to keep under review and evaluate the results of trial operations in weather forecasting, and formulate full implementation timeframes where appropriate," it said. The report cited the observatory's director as saying that "sufficient data covering different seasons and weather scenarios is needed to evaluate the performance of the potential new service on extension of the forecast period before launch", and that the forecaster will make assessments to formulate a full implementation schedule. Among other issues raised in the report, the auditor urged the weather forecaster to better educate the public on the tropical cyclone warning system, as it receives enquiries on the issuance of typhoon signals from time to time. It suggested the observatory publish "more comprehensive information" relating to tropical cyclones, such as factors that are taken into consideration when making decisions on issuing warnings. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- ['E-cigarettes, vapes ban to protect young people'](#) (2026-04-29 05:22)

A government official and an anti-smoking advocate on Wednesday said the ban on alternative smoking products will not impose additional restrictions on smokers but will enhance the protection of young people and prevent them from developing smoking habits. Their remarks

came a day before a ban comes into effect on the possession or use in public of alternativesmoking products, such as vapes, e-cigarettes, or heated tobacco. Anyone who violates the lawfaces a fine of up to HK\$50,000 and imprisonment of up to six months. Speaking on RTHK'sBackchat programme, Grace Wong, senior medical and health officer at the Tobacco andAlcohol Control Office of the Department of Health, highlighted the potential danger ofalternative smoking products for young people. She said overseas figures and findings haveshown that such products can quickly spread among young people and penetrate schoolsrapidly with their trendy designs and multiple flavours. She noted that adolescents who haveused e-cigarettes are three to four times more likely to start smoking conventional cigarettes inthe future. "These findings underscore the significant public health concerns... the product mayserve as an entry point to long-term tobacco use rather than a means of harm reduction," shesaid, calling on the public to stop using such products from now on. Hong Kong Council onSmoking and Health chief Henry Tong told the same programme that the ban will send a veryclear message to both young people and adults that alternative smoking products are reallyharmful. He also said the new values education framework released by the Education Bureauminthis month for all secondary and primary schools will teach students about the harm ofe-cigarettes and bring Hong Kong a step closer to being a smoke-free society. "With thecooperation of parents, teachers, and the Education Bureau, we believe that we willcontinuously strengthen tobacco control education in Hong Kong's education system," he said.Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- ['Purely CUHK's decision to repay loan early'](#) (2026-04-29 04:30)

The decision of a private hospital, run by the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), to fully repay a government loan of more than HK\$4 billion earlier than scheduled did not come upon government's request, the institution's council said on Wednesday. The CUHK Medical Centre (CUHKMC) said this week it would repay the HK\$4.033 billion government loan in full by March next year, ahead of its plan to start paying off the money in 2028. It had earlier sought extensions to its repayment plan twice. Lawmaker Bill Tang, who's also a CUHK Council member, stressed that CUHKMC has been recording a surplus since last November, even though it had suffered losses. "I can say it's purely 100 percent in consideration of the best public interest and best CUHK interest," he said. He went on to say the decision was purely determined by the CUHK Council and the CUHKMC board. They believed the decision would be best for CUHKMC's development, Tang added. Another CUHK Council member and legislator, Ben Chan, said the decision would not impact the university's operations, despite its plans to provide loans or bank loan guarantees to the medical centre to pay back the loan. The money would not come from funds set aside for education purposes or other designated purposes, he said. Legco's Panel on Health Services will discuss the repayment proposal on May 8. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [More anxious residents return to fire-damaged homes](#) (2026-04-29 04:17)

Some residents of Wang Fuk Court felt a mix of anxiety and uncertainty on Wednesday, as those living on five floors of Wang Tai House – one of the more severely damaged blocks in last year’s fire – began their turn to retrieve personal belongings. During this round of access, five floors of Wang Tai House and 10 floors of Wang Kin House will be opened for residents to return to their units and collect what they can. One resident, a man surnamed Liu who lives on a lower floor of Wang Tai House, described the experience as feeling like “opening a blind box”. “A blind box means you don’t know how badly it is burnt inside the unit. They only showed me a photo of the doorway. I wish they would have taken more photos so we could prepare mentally for the return,” he said. “If they could take more photos, they should have taken one of the bedroom, the living room and the kitchen so that we could have an idea of what we can retrieve.” Liu, who has lived in Wang Tai House for more than 40 years – since it first opened in 1983 – said there are many belongings he hopes to recover. Another resident, a man surnamed Lam who lives on a lower floor of Wang Kin House, said that while he misses his home, he feels he has no choice but to adapt. “I do miss this place, but there’s no choice. It’s burnt to this extent. I’m forced to move elsewhere. I see it as a change of environment after having lived here for over 40 years,” he said. Meanwhile, another resident – who has not seen the condition of her unit since the fire – said she had brought bags with her, hoping to collect as many of her belongings as possible. Residents of these two blocks have until May 1 to collect their belongings. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Extra support for Wang Fuk Court flat visits](#) (2026-04-29 03:50)

Authorities have announced expanded support for the households most severely affected by the fire in Tai Po, as more residents of Wang Fuk Court’s seven damaged blocks return to their units to retrieve personal belongings. The operation entered its 10th day on Wednesday, marking the start of the third phase. During this round, five floors of Wang Tai House and 10 floors of Wang Kin House will be opened. Residents of these two blocks have until May 1 to collect their belongings, after which the remaining residents of Wang Tai House, along with those in Wang Shing House, will have their turn from May 2 to 4. Speaking to reporters in Tai Po, Deputy Chief Secretary Warner Cheuk noted that the situation in Wang Tai House and Wang Cheong House is particularly severe, given the higher number of fatalities from last November’s blaze. As a result, he said special support measures have been put in place for residents of these blocks. “For units where fatalities occurred, each household will be accompanied throughout the entire process by a clinical psychologist and a social worker from the Social Welfare Department (SWD),” he said. “If individual households require additional support, the SWD will deploy more clinical psychologists or social workers. In addition, the number of accompanying police officers will be increased to two.” Cheuk added that the Civil Aid Service will be present on the main floors, while dedicated teams of social workers, clinical psychologists and mobilised civil servants will provide support on the upper floors as needed. He also noted that after discussions with many residents, a clear desire has emerged for another opportunity to revisit their flats. “Their wishes are very clear. After the first round for Blocks A to G is completed, residents of Wang Chi House will be scheduled to go upstairs in

batches from May 13 to 17," he said. "Then, once the current round of belongings collection for Blocks A to G concludes on May 4, we will announce as soon as possible the specific arrangements for allowing residents of these seven blocks to go upstairs again." Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Govt urged to markedly raise quota for southbound cars](#) (2026-04-29 03:34)

Business and Professionals Alliance lawmaker Aaron Bok on Wednesday said the government should significantly expand the daily quota for Guangdong vehicles travelling to Hong Kong, saying the current limit of 100 cars is too low. The engineering sector representative said he thinks the quota could be raised by as much as 10 times, to a 1,000 vehicles a day, saying this could help boost the economy. "I believe the government will take gradual steps in this regard. But if you ask me, it's not a problem to raise the quota to 500 a day or even 1,000," he said on the RTHK programme "In the Chamber". "A 10-fold rise might sound like a lot, but once the vehicles travel south, when they spread across the city, you don't really know where the cars have gone." Bok said his proposal to raise the quota would "definitely not" lead to traffic congestion, stressing that "not every vehicle will travel to Canton Road" in Tsim Sha Tsui as different drivers would want to go to different places. He said the SAR is mostly ready to digest more southbound vehicles, as many shopping malls have been fitted with national standard charging facilities or converters for electric vehicles from the mainland. The lawmaker went on to say that the existing rules require southbound drivers to obtain a Hong Kong licence before being allowed to travel. For additional safety, he said authorities could subject them to extra tests on important traffic regulations in the SAR, such as no parking by double yellow lines, no crossing double white lines and traffic signs for no entry zones. Bok raised similar questions in Legco. In a written reply to the legislature, transport minister Mable Chan said it plans to expand the quota in an orderly and gradual manner. "[The SAR government] is planning to progressively expand the scope of the scheme from the current four cities in Guangdong Province... to other Guangdong cities after six months of implementation, with a view to taking forward the Southbound Travel Scheme in a prudent and manageable manner," she said. Factors at play, the secretary noted, include the capacities of port facilities, local road traffic and support facilities such as electric vehicle chargers. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Wang Fuk Court residents make long climbs back home](#) (2026-04-28 14:05)

Dozens of Wang Fuk Court residents made long climbs back to their fire-ravaged homes on Tuesday to salvage what's left of their belongings, spending around two and a half hours on average in the buildings once engulfed in flames. Higher floors of Wang Cheong House and Wang Tao House were made available for people to return, with a total of 498 individuals making trips to the Tai Po housing estate for the day. The government said residents spent around two hours and 33 minutes on average inside the blocks. There were seven cases requesting police assistance in connection with suspected missing property such as watches, jewellery, cash and gold accessories, and officers were able to recover the belongings in one instance. In four other cases, there were no signs of ransacking and the residents could not

provide details on the belongings concerned. The force would further investigate the remaining cases. There was also one case involving a resident seeking help after feeling unwell. Residents of Wang Tai House and Wang Kin House would be allowed to return to retrieve their belongings from Wednesday. Edited by Priscilla Ng

- [Govt announces buyout plan for Wang Chi House owners](#) (2026-04-28 10:50)

The government said on Tuesday it will consider expanding the buyout plan for Wang Fuk Court to cover the only building in the residential estate not to have been affected by November's inferno. That came as homeowners in the block, Wang Chi House, reached a high level of consensus on one of the options being offered up by the government on their rehousing. About 77 percent of homeowners in the block expressed preliminary support for the sale of their homes to the government. Deputy Financial Secretary Michael Wong said at least 75 percent of the owners must sign a letter of acceptance to officially confirm their interest by June 30 for the offer to be binding. Residents of Wang Chi House, he said, will face a lot of difficulties if they wish to remain, even though the fast-spreading fire left their block untouched. "In terms of maintenance issues, they will have to put up quite a bit of money in order to carry out all the maintenance works necessary," he said. "And there are also fundamental problems relating to the underlying lease, relating to the underlying deed of mutual covenant, which if they want to modify under the current law, it requires the agreement of each and every one of the 1,984 households, which is really, really very difficult to reach." But Wong stressed that the government was not trying to force homeowners to take up the offer. "We do think the proposal is a good one for them... but it doesn't mean that we'd like to force them to accept the proposal," he said. "At the end of the day, it is their decision, having regard to their own circumstances. "But we do think that what we have put on the table is very reasonable and should actually be quite attractive." The government is offering the same deal to Wang Chi House flat owners as that for the seven blocks directly affected by the fire: HK\$8,000 per square foot for flats for which the land premium had not been paid and HK\$10,500 for those who have had their premium paid. The acquisition is expected to cost HK\$1 billion for Wang Chi House, Wong said. Officials also announced that its former residents will get to return home again between May 13 and 17 to collect their personal belongings. Four people will be permitted to make multiple trips during the designated three-hour time slot. "On the first day, the first seven levels will be opened, starting from the lower floors. Following that, six additional floors will be opened each day for the next four days," Deputy Chief Secretary Warner Cheuk said. People who used to live in the other seven blocks will also be allowed to make a second trip back to their flats, Cheuk added, and arrangements for them to do so will be announced in due course. Edited by Edmond Fong

- [HK export value rises at fastest pace in over 5 years](#) (2026-04-28 09:44)

The value of Hong Kong's exports expanded at their fastest pace in more than five years, rising by 35.8 percent year on year in March thanks to robust demand in AI-related electronic products, according to official statements. Figures released by the Census and Statistics

Department on Tuesday showed that the value of the city's outbound shipments stood at HK\$618.4 billion, compared with the HK\$408.8 billion seen in February when the year on year increase stood at 24.7 percent. It also marked the fastest rise since January 2021. Meanwhile, the value of imported goods rose by 41.2 percent year on year in March to HK\$707.5 billion, after an annual increase of around 30 percent a month earlier. The latest figures left the city with a trade deficit of HK\$89.1 billion, or about 12.6 percent of the value of imports of goods, in March. Commenting on the figures, a government spokesperson noted the city's exports "continued to stage a strong performance" during the period, but warned about the outlook ahead. "The heightened geopolitical tensions in the Middle East have led to an upsurge in international energy prices, posing downside risk to the near-term global economic outlook, with potential disruptions to global trade flows and supply chains," the spokesperson said. "Nonetheless, global demand for AI-related electronic products remains robust and should provide staunch support to the performance of Hong Kong's merchandise exports." Edited by Tony Sabine

- [HK Disneyland shows its magic with debt-free first](#) (2026-04-28 08:23)

Hong Kong Disneyland on Tuesday said it had fully repaid all shareholder loans to achieve zero debt for the first time by the end of its latest fiscal year – a major milestone that managing director Tim Sypko said reflected the resort's strengthening financial health. Unveiling the park's annual performance review, Sypko reported a net profit of HK\$536 million on revenue of HK\$8.69 billion for the 2024-25 fiscal year ending on September 27, 2025. In the previous fiscal year, the theme park achieved an historic net profit of HK\$838 million. "These accomplishments are especially notable given the rapid resumption of Hong Kong's outbound travel, ongoing macroeconomic uncertainty, as well as the extreme weather conditions Hong Kong experienced in 2025, all of which have influenced travel patterns and visit intent," he said. Despite those challenges, Sypko said, total annual attendance at the theme park reached 7.5 million while per capita guest spending rose two percent year on year to set a new record. Overall hotel occupancy also jumped six percentage points to 79 percent. The theme park, Sypko pointed out, remains one of Hong Kong's largest tourism and entertainment employers, with roughly 9,000 full-time and part-time staff on its payroll during the fiscal year. On the expansion front, Sypko noted that new Pixar and Marvel-themed attractions are already under construction, with the experience revolving around the fabled animation studio scheduled to launch next year. Looking ahead to the upcoming Labour Day Golden Week, he said the park is optimistic about visitor numbers from the mainland, adding that hotel occupancy is nearly full. "We are nothing but welcoming of all those guests to come visit Hong Kong Disneyland. The strength of our brand, the strength of our experience [and] the record level of revisit intent," he said. "These are powerful indicators that we expect to play well with this holiday." Sypko also emphasised the importance of a diverse guest mix, noting that the team will lean into different markets as appropriate. "Supported by a growing base of Disney fans across key markets and a strong pipeline of new and innovative offerings, Hong Kong Disneyland is optimistic about its long-term prospects and confident in its important role as an international travel destination for

Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area," he said. Edited by Tony Sabine

- ['Novel tech' fabrics, apricot wine get fair go in HK](#) (2026-04-28 08:14)

Mainland companies are hoping to tap into overseas markets as they showcase cutting-edge products and technologies at the city's trade fairs amid geopolitical risks and trade uncertainties. Their remarks came as some 5,600 exhibitors joined seven "mega" trade fairs at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai and AsiaWorld-Expo, which kicked off on Monday and would run until Thursday. The trade shows cover housewares, fashion, printing and packaging, premium gifts, as well as intellectual properties. First-time exhibitors from the mainland included those from provinces such as Xinjiang, Shanxi, Zhejiang and Jiangsu and cities like Wuhan and Quanzhou. Mary Ma – founder of the Hangzhou-based Textile Library, which focuses on using technologies to give a modern touch to fabrics with Chinese features – said she hoped the move to join a trade show this time, her company's second this year, could lead to more international exposure. "My inspiration mainly came from these traditional Chinese style patterns, and I hope to present them in a different way, so I created these new series," she told RTHK. "I hope that through the trade fairs this time, we can bring the new series all over the world because we might encounter more foreign buyers here, thereby enabling Chinese material brands to go global." Founded in 2015, the company also serves as a non-profit platform to "archive" some 5,000 fabrics, including those that can change colours based on different lighting and temperatures, that incorporate what she describes as "novel technologies". When asked if she has observed any increase in inquiries from overseas buyers, following a wave of "Chinamaxxing" or "Becoming Chinese" social media trends in Western countries, Ma preferred to stress that "it's important to also learn more about Western lifestyles – so as to be able to expand there". "Many people thought the East was full of mystery or exotic charms, but from a business perspective you must try to understand their way of life too," she said. "I don't merely hope that these raw materials and products from China will be tourist-centric items, I hope they can truly be integrated into people's daily lives overseas. "I hope to become one of the leaders in the lifestyle space and let people experience that the movement is towards being 'Creative in China' now, instead of 'Made in China'." The company is also collaborating with Thailand weaving factory, Thai Num Choke Textile, to explore opportunities in Southeast Asia. Thai Num's assistant manager Kamin Pongsarajanavit said: "I found a lot of interesting fabrics, special fabrics that we don't have in Thailand or that we don't have the capability to produce in Thailand, so we're starting to import some of her fabrics in the local market." Wang Jinxiang, chief executive of Shanxi Silin Agricultural Development, a young company that develops apricot fruit wine, said the company hopes to further expand overseas as well as in the Hong Kong market. "In fact, the apricots from our local Yanggao county are quite famous in the domestic market and are ranked among the top in the whole country," she said. "We are becoming more and more confident and we have already exported products to Sweden and France. We hope the events this time can further expand our market scale." With the company chalking up 57 million yuan in sales in the second half of last year, Wang said around 40 percent of sales now come from overseas and that the firm is now in the process of

striking deals with a South Korean company. When asked if the latest uncertainty in the MiddleEast might affect business planning and development, Wang acknowledged concerns overshipping costs but said the European market is still full of potential, "especially in France, as they have a strong appreciation for such refined, original and traceable products". "Our wine's aroma and taste also suit their dietary preferences, and some are used by Michelin-starred chefs there to match with their cuisines," Wang said. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Fanling Bypass to open to motorists on May 3](#) (2026-04-28 05:44)

The eastern section of the new Fanling Bypass will open to motorists on Sunday at 8am, marking the first major transport infrastructure project to be completed under the Northern Metropolis development. The four-kilometre dual two-lane carriageway that connects Fanling Highway to the Fanling North New Development Area will cut travel time by 10 minutes, as motorists travelling to and from Kowloon will no longer have to pass through the busy roads in Sheung Shui and Fanling town centres. The construction of the bypass also marked the first time the horizontal bridge rotation method had been deployed to allow a section of the bypass to span across the East Rail Line. Chief Engineer Pakin Cheung, from the Civil Engineering and Development Department, said the method allowed workers to first build the structure in a temporary position, before rotating it into its final placement in just two nights' time. "The aim mainly is to enhance speed and efficiency. As the bridge spans across the East Rail Line, we can only carry out works at night," he said. "If we build the prefabricated components one by one each day, it can take 100 to 200 nights." Moreover, the department also highlighted the use of China-made S960 ultra-high strength steel in a cycle track and pedestrian bridge at the Lung Yeuk Tau Interchange. Cheung said the strength of such steel is about three times higher than the conventional types. "Compared to usual concrete structures, we saved 30 percent of construction cost. What are the main reasons? Because it is lighter. Material-wise, it is more expensive," he said. "But because it is lighter, the foundation cost was reduced, and the time needed for construction would also drastically reduce." Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Geopark patrols to be stepped up for Golden Week surge](#) (2026-04-28 04:52)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department on Tuesday said it would beef up manpower at a tourist hotspot in Sai Kung during the Labour Day Golden Week, when 1,000 visitors are expected to flock there each day. Sharp Island – about 15 minutes by boat from Sai Kung Pier and part of Hong Kong's Unesco Global Geopark – is a popular destination for snorkellers given the highly diverse range of coral species to be found in the pristine waters off its shore. Assistant director Jim Chu said 600 to 800 visitors normally come to the island during weekends and public holidays, but the figure is estimated to surge during the May 1 to May 5 holiday. "On the island itself, 11 staff members will be responsible for patrols, giving out advice, as well as educating visitors," he said. "On the water, there will be five guides – two for snorkellers and three for kayakers – to help us manage the coral area." Staff will be stationed on the island from 9am to 6pm each day until the final kaito ferry departs. Drones will also be used to conduct hourly patrols to keep a lookout for actions that threaten marine ecology, Chu

added. Apart from trilingual broadcasts to remind revellers not to step on corals, senior marineconservation officer Janet Lee said the department would also be distributing water-proof mapsto point out spots that are unsuitable for snorkellers to enter and exit the water. “In researchthat we carried out on coral baselines with the World Wide Fund for Nature since the end of lastyear, we found out about the distribution of corals at snorkelling or diving areas, and wedesigned a coral-friendly route map based on the data," she said. "[The map] labels areas withdense corals and shallow waters where we least want people to enter or exit the water as coralsare most vulnerable." In the long run, the department is looking to draft laws to protect theecological environment. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [HKUST assures med complex, talent can advance together](#) (2026-04-28 03:53)

The president of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) on Tuesday expressed confidence that the construction of a new medical research complex and the recruitment of top-tier talent could move forward simultaneously, ahead of the facility's planned opening in 2028. A medical education and research complex is now under construction at the university's Clear Water Bay campus, following the government' s approval last November to establish the city' s third medical school. The complex will house the university' s new School of Medicine and play a key role in supporting teaching and research during its initial phase. Speaking to reporters after the groundbreaking ceremony for the complex on Tuesday, Nancy Ip said the new medical school had already drawn strong interest from international medical professionals. She noted that seven clinical professors have joined so far, and positive responses have come from individuals in the United States, Europe, Australia and Singapore who are keen to join the university. Ip said she is highly confident that the future medical school' s professors will bring international experience. She also highlighted the potential for collaboration between the third medical school and the city' s two existing medical schools, which could enhance Hong Kong' s contributions to innovative healthcare. Regarding tuition fees and curriculum design, Ip said the university would refer to industry standards. "We will benchmark against the two existing outstanding medical schools and also benchmark against other medical schools in the region. That is an ongoing process," she said. Ip added that HKUST graduates will be both clinically excellent and technologically adept, ready to serve the public as safe, competent and future-ready doctors who can leverage new technologies to improve patient care. Meanwhile, HKUST Council Chairman Harry Shum said the purpose of the third medical school is to provide more medical talent to serve the city' s community. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [CATL prices shares at low end of range at HK\\$628](#) (2026-04-28 03:33)

China's Contemporary Amperex Technology Company Limited (CATL) has priced its Hong Kong share sale at the lower end of the indicated range, raising HK\$39.19 billion, according to an exchange filing on Tuesday. CATL, the world's largest EV battery maker, is offering 62.4 million new H shares at HK\$628.20 each, representing a seven percent discount to the stock's last close. CATL has launched the share sale in Hong Kong as it seeks to secure capital with its

share price still elevated amid overseas expansion and intensifying competition in China's EVmarket. The term sheet showed that the new shares would be offered at a range betweenHK\$628.20 and HK\$651.80 each. The company said proceeds raised from the share salewould be used for the construction of global new energy projects and the layout of zero-carbonbusiness, research and development investment and daily working capital, among others.(Reuters) Edited by Tony Sabine

- [New med school to train next generation of doctors: CE](#) (2026-04-28 02:48)

Chief Executive John Lee on Tuesday said Hong Kong's newest medical school will help train a new generation of doctors and help elevate the SAR's research and medical education standards. The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) received government approval last November to establish the SAR's third medical school. As part of the initiative, the university is building a dedicated medical education and research complex to house its School of Medicine, which will support teaching and research during the school's initial phase. Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony for the complex on Tuesday, Lee emphasised that the new medical school would improve the quality, efficiency and capacity of the city's healthcare and medical services. "It will increase local doctor training, easing manpower shortages," he said. "It will help us meet the challenges of an ageing population. Beyond these, HKUST's medical school will develop differently from our two existing ones." He explained that this differentiation would "create synergy, drive innovation, generate multiplier effects and raise our medical education capabilities". "Hong Kong is fast emerging as an international centre for medical training, research and innovation," he said. "Building a third medical school will get us there that much faster. We are moving decisively to bring these benefits to Hong Kong." The chief executive said that he approved the university's proposal last year to launch a four-year graduate entry medical programme offering a combined Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree. The first cohort, he said, will consist of 50 students, with classes beginning in the 2028-2029 academic year. Lee noted that the government has established three working groups under a task force to ensure the new medical school's success. "The members include relevant government departments and outside experts, such as the chairman of the Medical Council of Hong Kong, these groups will now work with HKUST on every stage of implementation, advising curriculum, finances and more," he said. "I'm sure HKUST will also work closely with the Medical Council to complete course accreditation and advance all fronts. Our goal is clear: to ensure that the new medical school and its teaching hospital become a key pillar of Hong Kong's medical teaching and service system." The eight-storey complex, Lee said, will serve as one of the medical school's core facilities. It is scheduled for completion by mid-2028 – just in time to welcome the first cohort of students. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [CUHK Medical Centre to repay HK\\$4bn govt loan early](#) (2026-04-28 01:53)

A private hospital run by the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) has said it will fully pay back a government loan of more than HK\$4 billion ahead of schedule, though authorities said

they never made such a repayment request. The CUHK Medical Centre (CUHKMC) in Sha Tin had suffered losses and sought extensions to its repayment plan twice, but the hospital says its financials have since improved. "As the hospital's been implementing various measures to boost operations, and cost management and control, its financial situation has gradually stabilised," CUHKMC said in a statement published on Monday. The university plans to provide loans or bank loan guarantees to the hospital to support the repayment of the HK\$4.033 billion government loan by March of next year. In a statement, a government spokesperson said authorities never asked the hospital to settle the loan early. "The proposal for early repayment was initiated jointly by the CUHK and the CUHKMC to the government. Having taken into account various considerations, the government has agreed to the proposal in principle," the statement said. Legco's Panel on Health Services will discuss the repayment proposal on May 8. Edited by Altis Wong

- [Strong buying appetite at trade fairs despite war](#) (2026-04-27 13:34)

Traders from around the world attending seven "mega" fairs in Hong Kong, including those from the Middle East, said their buying appetite remains strong despite the ongoing conflict in the Gulf region that sent shockwaves through international supply chains. The trade fairs, ranging from lifestyle to intellectual properties, opened on Monday at the Convention and Exhibition Centre and AsiaWorld-Expo where thousands of exhibitors from dozens of countries and regions showcase their latest designs. Nitin Chaudhry, managing director at Fotokad Advertising Services which is based in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, said it's mostly business as usual even though cost has risen because of the Iran war. "And if we are booking any containers right now, yes, they are more expensive than earlier, but it's not something that cannot be absorbed. I'm sure as the situation improves, these charges would come to normalise as well," he said. Juzar Basrai, director at Wajihee Trading Co. which imports corporate gifts in Dubai, UAE, said while it may cost more to import from the SAR and the mainland, their buying interest remains strong. "It's still a story that is unfolding right now, but we stay committed to both Dubai, UAE, and to Hong Kong, as well as the mainland. Our business interests are growing stronger every year," he said. Mohamed Arif, managing director at AHA Trading Co, which also specialises in importing gifts and premiums, believes business ties between the Middle East and the SAR and the mainland will remain close despite the uncertainties arising from the war. "We are looking for new products from both Hong Kong and the mainland, especially Hong Kong because of the quality products," he said. In addition to business executives from the Middle East, merchants from other parts of the world said they too want to build stronger business ties with China and the region. Daniela Dalla Valle, directrice generale at retailer EK France, told RTHK that while the Iran war has "significantly" affected the industry, her company is still keen to explore houseware products from the mainland, the SAR and Asia in general, citing the region's "innovation, style, and cost". "Because I consider that in Asia... you are very fast in developing innovative products, and that's why we came," she said. Edited by Edmond Fong

- [71 arrested as 136 scammed of HK\\$530m](#) (2026-04-27 10:29)

Seventy-one people have been arrested this month in connection with 66 scam and money-laundering cases that saw 136 victims tricked into parting with more than HK\$530 million. Speaking on Monday, Inspector Julian Leung from the Hong Kong Island regional technology and financial crime unit said the suspects – 49 men and 22 women aged between 20 and 76 – were arrested for alleged money laundering and obtaining property by deception. Of the cases, an American company suffered the highest single loss of over HK\$14 million, he said. That, Leung said, came after the manager of the company received an email from a scammer posing as the firm’s chief executive in July requesting the transfer of the money to a Hong Kong bank account. “The unsuspecting manager made the transfer as instructed. It wasn’t until the person contacted the real CEO of the company that they learned the CEO’s email had been hacked and realised that it was a scam,” he said. Leung said two people involved in the case had been arrested on suspicion of money laundering. He warned that money laundering is a serious offence and subject to heavier sentences. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Greater Bay Area has 'key role in China's development'](#) (2026-04-27 09:39)

Financial Secretary Paul Chan on Monday said the Greater Bay Area would serve an all-round role in the national development process as the country focused on new quality productive forces and reshaping the economic cycle as part of its 15th Five-Year Plan. He made the remarks at a forum hosted by the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong to look at the opportunities for the SAR in the development blueprint outlined in the five-year plan. The Greater Bay Area, Chan pointed out, is equipped with a complete industrial chain for high-end manufacturing that is supported by the inherent advantages that Hong Kong brings. “The Greater Bay Area, which includes Hong Kong, plays an irreplaceable role on a global scale, combining an international financial centre, a frontline role in artificial intelligence and a high-end manufacturing ecosystem,” he said. “Hong Kong definitely is an international super-connector among the Greater Bay Area cities with both international finance and talent, connecting world-leading research, the mainland’s strong production capacity and global financial network.” The government, Chan said, is also formulating the SAR’s own five-year plan at full speed. The authorities will work with different sectors to explore the priorities, implementation plan and road map for the blueprint, he said. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [326 arrested in cross-border crackdown on child porn](#) (2026-04-27 09:33)

Hong Kong police said on Monday that they've worked with their counterparts in six regional countries in arresting 326 people on suspicion of producing and possessing child pornography, as well as other sex-related crimes. The arrests were made in the past month in the SAR, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia and Brunei. A Hong Kong cybersecurity superintendent, Ferris Cheung, said nine men, aged between 18 and 61, were arrested in the SAR in the joint operation. "Police seized 15 computers and external hard disks as well as eight phones from the suspects and their homes. During our preliminary inspection, officers found more than 200 videos and pictures of child pornography," she told a press conference. "We believe that they downloaded the materials through social media platforms, websites or

point-to-point sharing software." Police are also linking one of the suspects, a 28-year-old man, to an indecent assault case dating back to 2023 and 2024. Officers said the victim, a 12-year-old boy at the time, was assaulted on several occasions. The police said the suspect and the alleged victim got to know each other online. Officers called on parents to help prevent cybercrimes by building relationships of mutual trust with their children and offering them guidance over the use of social media. Edited by Edmond Fong

- ['Specific oversight not the purview of Buildings Dept'](#) (2026-04-27 08:36)

Assistant Director of Buildings Karen Cheung on Monday testified that while the Buildings Department possessed the statutory power to oversee the use of foam boards during renovation projects, specific oversight in the case of Wang Fuk Court fell elsewhere. That, she stressed, is because Wang Fuk Court, being a subsidised housing estate under the Home Ownership Scheme, falls under the jurisdiction of the Housing Bureau's independent checking unit, which has the responsibility to oversee the work of registered contractors and inspectors and to investigate any problems. While the checking unit does not have the statutory power to initiate prosecutions or conduct disciplinary actions, Cheung said, it is responsible for filing reports with the Buildings Department so that it could take any necessary enforcement action. Earlier, the independent committee looking into the disaster that claimed 168 lives last November heard the Buildings Department had failed to conduct on-site tests on the fire-retardant properties of scaffolding mesh nets used for major renovations at Wang Fuk Court before the inferno. Cheung also told the hearing that officials had relied mainly on certificates provided by contractors. The committee's lead counsel, Victor Dawes, expressed concern over how the department verified the credentials of such documents. He pointed out that it had, in the aftermath of the devastating inferno, found out that more than one allegedly fake fire-retardant certificate for scaffolding nets had been used during inspections before the fire occurred. Cheung, the first official from the department to testify, said staff had only checked if certificates were issued by recognised laboratories. The department, she stressed, has since made collection of random on-site samples for analysis a standard procedure. Cheung also said blocking windows with foam boards and creating temporary openings in emergency staircases are both violations of building construction regulations. However, she added that the use of temporary openings was not a common industry practice. Cheung noted that an inspection conducted in the aftermath of the inferno discovered that only eight out of the more than 400 buildings undergoing renovations had created such temporary openings. The inquiry also heard that there was a discrepancy in how the Housing Bureau's independent checking unit and the Buildings Department carries out on-site inspections. Quoting the written testimony of a checking unit staff member, Dawes noted it was standard practice for the checking unit to make an appointment with the contractor to ensure that registered inspectors would be present to answer questions. However, Cheung testified that the Buildings Department would not follow the same practice. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Sense of longing and belonging tinges Wang Fuk returns](#) (2026-04-27 04:52)

People driven away by the fire that tore through most of Wang Fuk Court continued on Monday to salvage what they could from flats in uninhabitable blocks and say emotional goodbyes to places they had called home for decades. The returnees on Monday were from Wang Cheong and Wang Tao blocks. Like many others, a man surnamed Lo came back for belongings that held special meaning to him and to bid farewell to his home. "[I want to retrieve] sentimental items such as those left by my late parents," he said. "I want to say goodbye to my home, where I had lived for decades. I will leave a note chronicling my memories of the place." Another man, surnamed Tse, returned to his Wang Tao House home to retrieve a Bible and an instant hot water dispenser used by his mother for medication. When asked what he wanted to do most inside his flat, he said: "Sit on the sofa. That was the most comfortable spot in my home." Tse's mother would not walk up because of old age and lack of stamina. She said her son would video call her after getting inside their flat so that she could have a final look. "This is my home. If I had been able to go up myself, I could have taken whatever I want. It's also exhausting for the younger ones," she added. Thirteen-year-old Eden came back to say goodbye to a place he had called home for almost half his young life. "I hope to get my award certificates and medals which I got from mathematical competitions. I asked to come back here. I want to see my home for one last time," he said. Edited by Tony Sabine

- ['Free beach access guaranteed under commercial model'](#) (2026-04-27 03:54)

Director of Leisure and Cultural Services Manda Chan on Monday said the government is open to expanding a proposed pilot scheme which would involve the private sector managing certain public beaches. Her remarks came after the Leisure and Cultural Services Department invited businesses' expression of interest in operating three public beaches – Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach in Tsuen Wan, Butterfly Beach in Tuen Mun and Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District on Hong Kong Island. Speaking on a RTHK programme, Chan said the three beaches have unique features and business potential to host commercial activities. Authorities have also invited interested groups to propose other public beaches that could be included in the pilot scheme, she said. Chan said the government would oversee the operators' performance to ensure and guarantee people's continued free access to these beaches, reasonable charges for activities and water safety. "We have certain expectations of the beach operators. Managing a beach is not an easy task and since this is a pilot scheme that we have never tried before, we hope the operators have experience in management, with strengths in venue management, market promotion and business skills," she said. "Also, the operators should have service planning abilities and we will review their proposed target audience, the expected number of participants and plans to engage with local residents and tourists." Lawmaker Chan Hok-fung, who represents Hong Kong Island West, also told RTHK that he hoped a commercial operation model could draw visitors to remote and less crowded beaches. He believes the pilot scheme would be attractive to businesses, adding that market forces can solve a manpower shortage of lifeguards. "In the past, we have observed that some swimming pools and beaches operated by the LCSD were closed due to a manpower shortage," he said. "The salaries [for lifeguards] offered by the LCSD are fixed, and I hope that the commercial operation could raise

the income of lifeguards and attract them to provide services at these beaches, improving the overall service efficiency.” The lawmaker also said he believes more public beaches could embrace commercial operations in the future. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [3D transport planning cuts risks for oversized loads](#) (2026-04-27 03:39)

The transport department has said a new three-dimensional route-planning platform is helping to make the transport of large modular construction components safer and more efficient. The "3D Swept Path Analysis Platform" funded under the government's HK\$1 billion Smart Traffic Fund, is designed to support innovation projects related to vehicles and smart mobility, and it has already been put to use in the construction of the Fanling Bypass (Eastern Section) that will be commissioned on May 3. The department's chief engineer George Fong said the project involved transporting prefabricated components for a large elevated cycle track and footbridge made of ultra-high strength steel from Tuen Mun to Fanling. Fong said the route was especially challenging because of the size of the components and the complicated road network involved. Civil Engineering and Development Department engineer Keith Cheng said the original route proposed – through Wong Chu Road – would have caused a clearance problem with a noise barrier. He said the route was later changed to Tsing Wun Road after the platform's simulation showed the obstruction. Cheng added that the platform saved about three months of construction time, while the entire transport operation for the components was completed in over 12 nights. The analysis platform uses 3D computer technology to simulate how oversized loads move through complex junctions, significantly reducing the time needed for site inspections and route assessments. "Unlike traditional two-dimensional analysis for road transport, which can miss many details, the 3D environment allows us to see nearby traffic lights and obstacles and the exact clearance around them," Fong explained. "This allows us to deal with the actual situation at complex junctions, roundabouts and narrow road sections, and greatly reducing the safety risks involved in transporting the components," he added. Compared with traditional flat analysis, Fong said it can also identify more potential hidden hazards. The Fanling Bypass (Eastern Section) is the first major transport infrastructure project completed under the development of the Northern Metropolis. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Labour Day Golden Week set to pack hotels](#) (2026-04-27 03:10)

The coming Labour Day Golden Week holiday is expected to see the hotel sector do booming business, a sector representative said on Monday. Speaking on an RTHK programme, lawmaker Alan Chan who is also the chief operations officer at Miramar Group said that the company's hotels in Causeway Bay and Tsim Sha Tsui were at 95 percent capacity and chalking up an average stay of three days in spite of a rise in room prices by five to eight percent compared to last year. This reflected a rise in demand, he said, with mainland visitors less sensitive to room prices given that the yuan was appreciating. Chan pointed out that the unstable situation in the Gulf had not disrupted mainland visitors' plans to head to Europe, as planes departing from the mainland were transiting through Russian airspace instead of flying through the Middle East. He noted that many mainland travellers have also decided to head for Hong Kong instead

of Japan. "If you look at flights from the mainland to Japan, you can see they keep shrinking compared to the same period last year," Chan said. "And because of that, a lot of mainland travellers have chosen to go to South Korea instead – that's their top priority right now. "Or they're heading to Southeast Asia via Hong Kong. Or coming directly to Hong Kong." Mega events such as concerts at Kai Tak Sports Park, which opened last year, and the Hong Kong Coliseum have also helped bring in a fair share of tourists, he said. Chan expects the retail sector to also benefit from the influx of mainland tourists in the upcoming Golden Week holiday, saying that there had been a five-percent rise in hotel occupancies in the first quarter, which also boosted sales at shopping malls nearby. The Immigration Department estimates the five-day holiday period, which commences on May 1, would bring 980,000 mainland visitors to the SAR – a seven percent growth from a year earlier. Edited by Aaron Tam

- [Medical Council complaint inquiry adjourned to June 7](#) (2026-04-26 10:57)

An inquiry into an alleged medical incident in 2009 has been adjourned to June 7 for closing submissions. The Medical Council disciplinary hearing centered around an incident that left a boy permanently disabled after developing cerebral palsy and quadriplegia soon after his birth. The boy's parents alleged that a Baptist Hospital paediatrician, Sit Sou-chi, had been too slow to act on warnings from nurses about the baby's condition, after he developed a seizure in December 2009. On the second day of the hearing on Sunday, Sit said he believed the infant was choking on milk when he was notified by a nurse about the baby's abnormal situation over a phone call at around 4.30am. Sit said he was told that the newborn developed abnormalities around an hour before the phone call, and he subsequently instructed the nurse to put the infant into an incubator, suspend feeding and continue observation. He also told the inquiry that he considered the possibility of a brain infection but believed it was unlikely as the baby's situation had stabilised. Counsel for the Medical Council questioned whether Sit was telling the truth, as he had told the baby's parents in a meeting eight days after the incident that the infant was suspected of having convulsions, according to an audio recording played at the hearing. In response, Sit said the context of the conversation should be considered as he made the remarks after the baby was diagnosed with meningitis. The inquiry was initially scheduled for 2016, but was repeatedly pushed back and eventually abandoned last year after the council's inquiry panel decided that too much time had passed for the doctor to get a fair hearing. In November, the council said it would reopen the inquiry after Secretary for Health Lo Chung-mau ordered a review of how the medical watchdog operates. Edited by Priscilla Ng

- [Alternative smoking products ban won't hurt tourism](#) (2026-04-26 08:38)

A large-scale publicity campaign is underway to remind tourists about an upcoming ban on alternative smoking products, a health official said on Sunday. From April 30, the possession or use of alternative smoking products, such as vapes, e-cigarettes or heated tobacco in public will be prohibited. Offenders will be subject to a fine of up to HK\$50,000, and imprisonment of up to six months. Speaking on a radio programme, Director of Health Ronald Lam said the new ban is not expected to impact the travel industry because he does not believe tourists come to Hong

Kong just to smoke alternative tobacco products. He said visitors are being notified of the new regulations. "We have cooperated with other departments to carry out large-scale publicity, including posting large signs at entry ports and having inspectors from the Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office distribute materials to tourists," he explained. "We are also working with the Travel Industry Authority and the Tourism Board to disseminate relevant information, so that tourists can know about the new law in advance." He added that mainland media outlets are also helping to release information. Lam reiterated that the legislation is necessary because alternative smoking products are just as harmful as traditional cigarettes. He added that in the longer term, the administration hopes to further bring down the local smoking rate, which currently stands at 8.5 percent. Edited by Priscilla Ng

- ['One last photo' — Wang Fuk residents' final goodbyes](#) (2026-04-26 05:29)

Residents of the fire-ravaged Wang Fuk Court on Sunday continued to say emotional goodbyes to their homes, with one family planning to take a final group photograph inside their apartment. Authorities are allowing people to return in small groups to collect their belongings. Ms Poon, a resident, lived in one of the destroyed blocks. Like many others, she returned not just for clothes or documents, but for memories. "We agreed we want to take one more family photo inside our home. We've always had family gatherings at home... every birthday, we go back to that flat to eat together. So we already have so many group pictures all taken inside that house," she said. "So today, when we have this chance... maybe the very last time we come back. We also want to make sure we take one last family photo in this home. As a keepsake." Another resident, Mr Ma, came back not just for belongings — but to pay tribute to a neighbour who died in the fire. "Today I brought flowers. We just wanted to give a little something — from the heart — to her. She was like a friend to us. Around 30-years-old. A mother," he said. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [HK's financial growth unstoppable: FS](#) (2026-04-26 05:25)

Financial Secretary Paul Chan says the development of Hong Kong's financial market is "unstoppable" despite global uncertainties. Writing in his weekly blog, Chan said the SAR continued to rank first globally in initial public offerings this year, with the funds raised through IPOs exceeding HK\$140 billion as of last week. More high-quality enterprises are using Hong Kong's fundraising platform for their global business expansion, he said. Chan also said global investors are diversifying their asset allocation amid rapid technology development and geopolitical risks to reduce reliance on a single market. "Hong Kong is stable and safe, and gathers capital and talent," he said. "With advantages including free flow of capital and data, as well as a legal system and the rule of law that are widely known and trusted by the business sector, Hong Kong's attractiveness to global investors is further rising." The FS went on to say that investors were increasing their investments in Asia, where cutting-edge enterprises and projects in green energy, advanced manufacturing and digital finance are emerging. "As a leading international financial hub in the region, Hong Kong will continue to serve as a super-connector to facilitate the efficient connection between capital and opportunities,

achieving win-win results,” he said. Chan added the growing financial market has supported the local economy. He said the Labour Day Golden Week holiday is expected to bring about 980,000 mainland visitors to Hong Kong, boosting the retail, catering, hotel and tourism sectors. Edited by Tony Sabine

- [Movie fans pack theatres for HK\\$30 Cinema Day](#) (2026-04-25 10:04)

Movie lovers packed theatres across Hong Kong on Saturday for the annual Cinema Day, which offered screenings for just HK\$30. At a cinema in Mong Kok, long queues formed outside the venue in the afternoon, with the line at one point stretching well beyond the entrance. One woman said she and her friends usually spend weekends shopping and relaxing on the mainland, but they decided to stay in Hong Kong specifically for the cheap movie screenings. She added that she wished such discounts were available more often. “It would be better if it happened once a month,” she said. “It could help boost the city’s economy. It will make people want to spend in the city more.” Some students who had just finished their university entrance exams also took advantage of the offer. A student surnamed Leung said she loves watching movies with her friends and that the discounted price – which is even lower than regular student tickets – was too good to pass up. “There are a lot of distractions when you watch movies at home, like playing on your phone,” she said. “But you will be more focused when you watch in the theatres. I think the vibes are also very different.” Leung added that Cinema Day is a great activity to share with friends and that holding it more often might help avoid overcrowding. A visitor from Shenzhen surnamed Li made a special trip to Hong Kong just to catch a film. She said the atmosphere in the city’s movie theatres is excellent, though she finds regular ticket prices too expensive. She was thrilled to secure discounted tickets for herself and her friends. Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism Rosanna Law shared on social media that she also took part in the annual event, watching “Someone Like Me” featuring actress Fish Liew, who recently won Best Actress at the Hong Kong Film Awards. Law noted that watching movies in the theatre allows for complete immersion and careful appreciation. According to figures released at noon, she said this year’s cinema attendance increased by nearly 10 percent compared to last year. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Wang Fuk returnees file over 40 lost property reports](#) (2026-04-25 09:25)

Police said on Saturday that more than 40 reports have been lodged regarding missing property in the first five days that displaced residents of Wang Fuk Court were allowed to return to their homes to salvage what they could. Since Monday, residents were allowed to visit their former residences in batches for the first time since seven out of the estate's eight blocks were ravaged by a fast-spreading fire in October. Throughout the five days, former residents of Wang Sun, Wang Cheong and Wang Yan houses were allowed to go home to around 460 units. Police Commissioner Joe Chow said there are no indications of theft among the cases for the time being. “Some units had been ravaged by the fire and belongings turned to ashes, so the items may never be found,” he said. “Some items were actually recovered immediately or were found after we helped with a follow-up search. “There are also some cases where residents were not

quite sure where the item was located originally, or whether it was ever in the unit in the first place." Chow said the force has established a dedicated team to investigate such cases and that it will continue to monitor the situation. Back in March, three renovation workers were arrested for allegedly stealing jewellery from a unit at the estate. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Vets show guts in fish-out-of-water surgery on ray](#) (2026-04-25 06:47)

Ocean Park said its veterinary team has successfully saved a cownose ray from a life-threatening gastric rupture in what experts believe may be a world-first surgical achievement. In an announcement that coincides with World Veterinary Day on Saturday, the park said the approximately 20-year-old male ray was discovered to have excessive fluid buildup and a persistent intestinal protrusion during a routine health examination in late March. Further diagnostic testing revealed a grave internal injury: foreign objects, including remnants of a fish head and squid tentacles, had escaped into the ray's body cavity, indicating a severe stomach wall perforation. A subsequent CT scan confirmed the extent of the damage, with Ocean Park saying that the condition would have been fatal without surgical intervention. The team performed a two-hour exploratory surgery under general anaesthesia the following day, in which surgeons removed the foreign debris and repaired the stomach perforation. Open surgery on elasmobranchs – the class of marine animals that includes sharks and rays – presents unique challenges, in which veterinarians must manage anaesthesia on an aquatic animal outside of water, navigate the complexities of gastric surgery and contend with poor wound healing and post-operative infection risks. "This was truly one of the rarest cases our team has ever encountered," said Paolo Martelli, the park's director of veterinary services. "We are not aware of any global precedents for a gastric rupture of this nature in a cownose ray receiving such an emergency and extensive surgical repair, making this a potentially pioneering achievement in marine veterinary medicine." The ray is now in a stable condition, with the surgical wound showing no signs of complications. The veterinary team said it would continue to monitor its recovery closely. Ocean Park highlighted the case as part of its ongoing commitment to animal care, research and conservation, noting that the expertise of its veterinary staff not only ensures the well-being of the park's animal ambassadors but also contributes valuable insights to global veterinary science. Edited by Thomas McAlinden

- [Push to extend Bay licensing scheme for lawyers](#) (2026-04-25 05:23)

Deputy Secretary for Justice Horace Cheung said on Saturday that the Department of Justice would discuss with mainland counterparts the regularising of a pilot scheme that has licensed more than 600 local lawyers to practise in the Greater Bay Area. The six-year scheme, launched by the GBA Lawyers Organisation and set to expire in October, is part of the group's plan to fully leverage lawyers' professional strengths to enable them to contribute to the GBA's development. Speaking on an RTHK programme, Cheung said the department would be pushing for regularisation as the scheme had been well received by the SAR's legal industry, with the number of lawyers sitting for the licensing examination each year remaining stable. He also said more and more countries and regions were learning about, and joining, the International

Organization for Mediation (IOMed), which was launched here in October. When asked whether IOMed could play a mediating role in the ongoing disputes in the Middle East, Cheung said it was up to the parties concerned. "It would be up to the US, Israel, and Iran to decide whether they would want to make use of the International Organization for Mediation," he said. "But I believe a lot of countries and regions around the world, when they encounter disputes with others in the future, they will be willing to make use of the organisation to deal with their problems." Cheung also said the Department of Justice would promote the Global Mediation Summit to be held here next month and that the event would help position the SAR as an international mediation centre. Edited by Robert Kemp

- [Law warning for shops, taxis that prey on tourists](#) (2026-04-25 04:27)

Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism Rosanna Law has vowed to take a tough stance against unethical practices that have long tarnished the city's tourism reputation, with the mainland's five-day Labour Day Golden Week approaching. The Immigration Department estimates that about 980,000 mainland visitors will arrive by sea, land and air between May 1 and 5. Speaking on a radio programme on Saturday, Law said authorities are determined to crack down on two long-standing problems: coercive shopping and so-called "black taxis" – rogue drivers who overcharge passengers. She noted that the industry's previous self-regulatory structure had already been overhauled with the establishment of the Travel Industry Authority, as a direct result of that determination. "The authority has conducted many high-profile inspections, and some travel agencies and tour guides have had their licenses revoked," Law said. "I hope this shows our resolve." Law made it clear that there would be zero tolerance for misconduct, especially as Hong Kong rebuilds its tourism image. "If today we are seeing a return of visitors, and Hong Kong's tourism reputation is being rebuilt – and possibly even better than before – I will never tolerate any bad apples," she said. Regarding black taxis, Law said enforcement operations would target known problem areas. "In fact, we know they could be at the airport, border checkpoints or even at night in Lan Kwai Fong," she said. "So we will definitely clamp down on black taxis." The Customs and Excise Department and the Travel Industry Authority have already carried out joint inspections targeting unethical business practices such as switching price tags and mishandling change by some retailers. Law urged industry players to cherish Hong Kong's tourism reputation, warning that there is no room for shortcuts. "Don't think that just because there are more visitors – some of whom might not be fully aware – you can take the chance to do something illegal," she said. "First, it harms our tourism reputation – nobody wants that. Second, you can't get away with it now." The reason, she explained, is the ubiquity of mobile phones and social media. "Mobile phones are so widespread and social-media penetration is so deep, if you do something, how could nobody know? And once we know, how could we not enforce the law?" Law said. She said the Travel Industry Authority would step up inspections during the May Day holiday period. She encouraged tourists to come forward if they experienced any problems. "Any tourist who suspects forced shopping can complain to us – complain to the authority – and we will immediately handle it very seriously," Law said. Edited by Robert Kemp

- [Buying and selling of illicit fuel 'not rampant'](#) (2026-04-25 03:01)

Commissioner of Customs and Excise Chan Tsz-tat on Saturday said that current regulatory prohibitions against fuel smuggling and penalties are sufficient to deter any surge in crime that may result from the high oil prices caused by the current Middle East stand-off. His comments came after his department, in joint operations with the Fire Services Department and the police, carried out 18 raids on illegal fuelling stations and suspects engaged in illegal fuel transfers in the first three months of the year. The raids resulted in the arrest of 14 people and the seizure of 8 vehicles. Chan said such crimes were not "rampant" at the moment and that most illegal fuel stations operated in the rural parts of the SAR. "The offenders are not only subject to criminal sanctions, including prosecution," he said after appearing on a radio programme. "Connected vehicles will be seized, and we will apply to the courts for the confiscation of those vehicles. "Buying illicit fuel, which is a dutiable commodity, is a criminal offence in Hong Kong. " They will be subject to criminal prosecution... they may also be subject to prison sentences." Chan also said strengthening public awareness of the offence of buying illicit fuel was of utmost importance. Last month, Security Minister Chris Tang said officials were studying tougher penalties for those purchasing illegal fuel. Edited by Robert Kemp