

# Speech by SCMA at SCMP China Conference: Greater Bay Area (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, at "SCMP China Conference: Greater Bay Area" this morning (August 28):

Gary (Chief Executive Officer of the South China Morning Post, Mr Gary Liu), Tammy (Editor-in-Chief of the South China Morning Post, Ms Tammy Tam), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It gives me great pleasure to join you all in today's SCMP China Conference, and to share with you a few thoughts on Hong Kong's participation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area or the GBA in short.

With the promulgation of the Outline Development Plan by the Central Government in February this year, the world has turned their eyes to this GBA, eager to explore the opportunities arising from its development. Indeed, the GBA represents an enormous market with a population of 71 million and a gross domestic product of US\$1.6 trillion. As one of the most open and economically vibrant regions in China, the GBA is well placed to give new impetus to Hong Kong's development.

Hong Kong has been actively participating in the formulation of the Outline Development Plan. One of the six Basic Principles is to adhere to "one country, two systems" and act in accordance with the law. Hong Kong's role in the GBA is very clear. As stated in the Outline Development Plan, we shall strive to consolidate and enhance Hong Kong's status as an international financial, transportation and trade centre as well as an international aviation hub, strengthen our status as a global offshore RMB business hub and our role as an international asset management centre and a risk management centre, promote the development of high-end and high value-added financial, commercial and trading, logistics and professional services, etc, make great efforts to develop the innovation and technology industries, nurture emerging industries, establish Hong Kong as the centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region, and develop into an international metropolis with enhanced competitiveness. Hong Kong is a highly open and international city equipped with a facilitating business environment, robust rule of law and an independent judiciary. Leveraging on our strengths, we can help bring in foreign investments and know-how to the GBA, and join hands with Mainland enterprises to develop markets and explore opportunities overseas.

What is so unique about the Greater Bay Area? There are "one country, two systems", three separate customs territories and three currencies in this GBA, which is unprecedented around the world. The Central Government has

therefore set up a high-level Leading Group – chaired by Vice Premier Han Zheng and with the Chief Executives of the Hong Kong and Macao SARs as members – to co-ordinate and steer the development of the GBA. The Leading Group had held two meetings over the past year or so. The governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have also set up their own institutions and co-ordination mechanisms with a view to exploring policy breakthroughs and innovation.

Numerous measures have been announced to support the GBA's development into an international innovation and technology (I&T) hub, including supporting higher education institutions and scientific research institutes from Hong Kong and Macao to participate in projects under Guangdong technology programmes. There were also measures to facilitate the movement of people and goods within the GBA, including the introduction of residence permits, the new calculation method of "183 days" for paying Mainland income tax, providing tax relief to high-end talents, facilitating cross-boundary vehicles entering and exiting Mainland ports, and expanding the implementation of the Speedy Customs Clearance Scheme (i.e. the Single E-Lock Scheme).

If I have to summarise "Greater Bay Area" in one word, "innovation" is definitely the key. With innovative minds, we can surely overcome the challenges arising from the institutional differences among the three places. In fact, innovation and technology is among the top policy agenda of the Chief Executive. Hong Kong has a solid foundation to support developing the GBA into an international I&T hub. We have top-notch tertiary institutions, a robust intellectual property regime, advanced financial infrastructure, free flow of information and a vibrant business environment. The current-term Government has also invested over HK\$100 billion on this front. For example, a \$20 billion of funding is reserved to develop the Lok Ma Chau Loop into the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park, and a \$10 billion has been set aside to support non-profit-making scientific research institutions to be set up at the two InnoHK research clusters on healthcare and on artificial intelligence and robotics, etc. The substantial resources invested speak for our commitment and determination.

We have also been encouraging young people to understand and explore the opportunities in the GBA, including setting up their own business in the GBA. For instance, the Government introduced two new funding schemes under the Youth Development Fund to further support youth entrepreneurship, and Guangdong has also developed a series of youth entrepreneurial bases while offering concessionary policies for aspiring entrepreneurs from Hong Kong.

To attract foreign capital and talents, we have also been joining hands with Guangdong and Macao to promote the GBA overseas. We have so far conducted joint-promotional activities in Paris last year and in Tokyo in April this year, and we are planning for similar overseas promotion in 2020.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Greater Bay Area is a key development strategy of our country. It has now entered into the stage of full-fledged implementation. National leaders are committed to the further opening up and deepening reform of the country. Taking forward the GBA development is surely

a key initiative in this respect in the coming decades. New cross-boundary infrastructure like the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (Hong Kong Section) and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge has made it more convenient for people to travel, to work, to do business and to live within the GBA. The GBA can help identify new areas of growth for the Hong Kong economy, while allowing us to serve the country's needs with our strengths.

The Government will work in earnest with our community for a peaceful environment, so that various sectors – including enterprises, professional sectors and our fellow citizens – can join hands in grasping the immense opportunities ahead. The Government will endeavour to play the roles of facilitator and promoter to help Hong Kong take part in the development of the GBA, allowing everyone in Hong Kong to benefit from the GBA in the years to come.

Thank you.

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## **Employers and employees should take precautions against heat stroke**

As the Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and employees to take appropriate precautions to prevent heat stroke when working in a hot or humid environment.

Heat stroke could occur if an employee works in a hot or humid environment for prolonged periods of time, as the body may fail to regulate its temperature by effective heat dissipation through sweating.

The symptoms of heat-related illnesses include feeling thirsty, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, headache, dizziness, muscle spasm or even mental confusion, and loss of consciousness or convulsion in severe cases.

Construction workers, cleaning workers, kitchen workers and porters, for example, are more prone to heat stroke as they may be working for long hours in such an environment, especially if appropriate preventive measures have not been taken.

The LD reminds employers to arrange for a suitable assessment of the risk of heat stress in the work environment and take appropriate preventive measures. The LD has produced two leaflets entitled "Checklist for Heat Stress Assessment at Construction Sites" and "Checklist for Heat Stress Assessment at Outdoor Cleansing Workplaces" respectively. Employers engaged in construction or outdoor cleaning work are advised to refer to these checklists in assessing the risk of heat stress at their workplaces. As for

heat stress assessment at a workplace in general, employers can refer to a booklet entitled "Risk Assessment for the Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work" produced by the LD.

The LD also reminds employers and employees to take the following precautions to prevent heat stroke:

#### Employers

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- (1) Take heed of the weather report and adopt shift work arrangements for employees to reduce their exposure to the hot environment, or arrange appropriate rest breaks for them during very hot periods;
- (2) Avoid working under direct sunlight and set up temporary sunshade wherever possible;
- (3) Provide cool potable water for employees at all times during work. If necessary, provide drinks containing electrolytes for employees to replenish loss of salt during profuse sweating;
- (4) Minimise physical demands by using tools or mechanical aids at work;
- (5) Increase air flow by enhancing ventilation or air-conditioning as appropriate;
- (6) Isolate heat-generating facilities at the workplace and use insulating materials to minimise heat dissipation to the other work areas; and
- (7) Provide relevant information and training for employees on heat stroke such as preventive measures and first aid treatment.

#### Employees

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- (1) Wear clothing made of suitable materials (for example, cotton) that is loose-fitting and light-coloured to help heat dissipation, minimise heat absorption and allow sweat evaporation;
- (2) Wear a wide-brimmed hat when working outdoors;
- (3) Drink plenty of water or other appropriate beverages with electrolytes to replenish the fluids and salt lost through sweating; and
- (4) Whenever there are any symptoms of heat-related illnesses, rest in a cool or shady place and drink water, inform supervisors to take appropriate actions immediately.

Some employees may have difficulty in adapting to a hot working environment owing to their own health conditions. Employers should take this into account and consider the recommendations of their doctors when assigning work to these employees.

In addition to the publications on risk assessment, the LD has produced a leaflet entitled "Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work in a Hot Environment" for the public. The publications can be obtained free of charge from the offices of the Occupational Health Service of the LD, or downloaded from the department's webpage at [www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2\\_9.htm](http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_9.htm).

The LD organises occupational health talks in public places and at its own training venues regularly to raise employers' and employees' awareness of occupational health. Details of health talks on the prevention of heat stroke

at work in a hot environment in August to September are as follows:

(A)

Dates: September 5, 17 and 27

(am);

August 29 and September 9 and 24

(pm)

Time: Half-day

Venue: Occupational Safety and Health Training Centre of the Labour Department, 13/F, Kolour-Tsuen Wan I, 68 Chung On Street, Tsuen Wan, New Territories

For enrolment or enquiries about these occupational health talks, please call 2852 4040 or 2361 8240 (for talks organised at the Occupational Safety and Health Centre). Moreover, the LD also provides an outreach health education service and occupational health nurses will, on invitation, disseminate occupational health information at workplaces at a convenient time. Please contact the nursing officer at 2852 4062 for details. All these health talks are free of charge.

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## Firing practice for September 2019

Firing practice will take place at two military sites, namely the San Wai/Tai Ling Firing Range and the Tsing Shan Firing Range, next month (September).

Red flags or red lamps will be hoisted at the firing areas before and during firing practice. For their safety, people are advised not to enter the firing areas.

Following are the dates and times for the firing practice sessions in September 2019:

San Wai/Tai Ling Firing Range

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Date	Time
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September 2 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 3 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 4 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 5 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 6 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 9 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 10 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 11 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 12 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 13 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 16 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 17 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 18 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 19 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 20 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 23 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 24 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 25 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 26 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 27 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 30 (Monday)	8am-9pm

#### Tsing Shan Firing Range

Date	Time
September 2 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 3 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 4 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 5 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 6 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 9 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 10 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 11 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 12 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 13 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 16 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 17 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 18 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 19 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 20 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 23 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 24 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 25 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 26 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 27 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 30 (Monday)	8am-9pm

# CHP reminds public on precautions against heat stroke during very hot weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (August 28) reminded members of the public, particularly those undertaking outdoor activities, to take heed of necessary measures against heat stroke and sunburn in very hot weather.

"The public should carry and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration while engaging in outdoor activities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Those engaged in strenuous outdoor activities should avoid beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee and tea, as well as alcohol, as they speed up water loss through the urinary system," the spokesman explained.

"The obese, the sick, including those with heart disease or high blood pressure, the old and the young are more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses. They should pay special attention," the spokesman added.

The public should adopt the following precautions:

- Wear loose and light-coloured clothing to reduce heat absorption and facilitate sweat evaporation and heat dissipation;
- Avoid vigorous exercise and prolonged activities like hiking or trekking as heat, sweating and exhaustion place additional demands on the physique;
- Perform outdoor activities in the morning or late afternoon;
- For indoor activities, open all windows, use a fan or use air-conditioning to maintain good ventilation; and
- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day.

If working in a hot environment is inevitable, introduce shade in the workplace where practicable, and start work slowly and pick up the pace gradually. Get into a cool area for rest at regular intervals to allow the body to recuperate.

The public should also note the latest and the forecast Ultraviolet (UV) Index released by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO). When the UV Index remains high (6 or above):

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and the eyes to sunlight;
- Wear loose long-sleeved clothing made of close-woven fabrics;
- Wear a wide brim hat or use an umbrella;
- Seek a shaded area or put on UV-blocking sunglasses;

- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen lotion with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or above. Apply liberally and reapply after swimming or sweating; and
- While using DEET-containing insect repellents for personal protection against mosquito-borne diseases, apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

If symptoms develop, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, shortness of breath or confusion, rest and seek help immediately, and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

The public may get more information from the DH's Health Education Hotline (2833 0111), [heat stroke](#) page and [UV radiation](#) page; the HKO's Dial-a-Weather (1878 200), latest [weather and forecast](#), [UV Index](#) and weather information for [hiking and mountaineering](#); and [press releases](#) of the Labour Department on precautions against heat stroke for outdoor workers and their employers when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force.

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## **Assess the risk of heat stroke to employees**

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force:

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force, they should assess the risk of heat stroke to their employees and adopt effective preventive measures such as providing cool drinking water, setting up temporary sunshade and providing mechanical aids to reduce physical exertion of employees. Employees should drink water regularly and be mindful of their physical condition. If early heat stroke symptoms such as headache and thirst appear, they should rest in a cool or shady place and drink water immediately. They should also inform their supervisors to take appropriate actions.