

## Red flag hoisted at Pui O Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (May 18) that due to big waves, red flag has been hoisted at Pui O Beach in Islands District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

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

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

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

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## SCED: Hong Kong seeks to strengthen free and open trade alliances (with photos)

Towards the long-term vision of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) along with all Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) members, Hong Kong and like-minded economies are seeking to strengthen alliances for free and open trade through free trade agreements (FTAs).

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, made the above remarks at a discussion session themed "Advancing APEC's Regional Economic Integration Agenda" at the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade

(MRT) Meeting in Viña del Mar, Chile today (May 17, Viña del Mar time), citing the signing of the Hong Kong-Australia FTA and Investment Agreement in March.

"True to our free trade commitment, the FTA eliminates all import tariffs and opens up many service sectors for market access and treatment no less favourable than for local services. Against the prevailing uncertainties in the global economy, the two agreements, in providing transparency and predictability, give a big boost of confidence to our rules-based trading system," Mr Yau said.

In the morning, Mr Yau participated in another discussion session entitled "Advancing APEC's support for the WTO", which explored concrete initiatives that the APEC can take to support the World Trade Organization (WTO).

"It is of utmost importance that the conduct of international trade abides by transparent and non-discriminatory rules, and that WTO Members can settle disputes under the established mechanism of the WTO. In fact, it is high time for APEC to sing in chorus to affirm its pledge to strengthening and defending the multilateral trading system. Hong Kong stands ready to support an MRT statement signifying the strong and unwavering commitment of APEC to upholding the rules-based system," he said.

On the margins of the APEC MRT, Mr Yau took the opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with the Federal Minister of International Trade Diversification of Canada, Mr James Carr; the Deputy Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, Mr Timur Igorevich Maximov; and the Assistant Minister of Commerce, Mr Li Chenggang. They had useful exchanges on bilateral trade and economic relations and issues of mutual concern.

Mr Yau will continue to meet with other ministers of member economies during the APEC MRT tomorrow (May 18, Viña del Mar time). He will also attend a discussion session entitled "Strengthening Inclusive and Sustainable Growth in the Digital Era" before departing for London, the United Kingdom, for a duty visit from May 20 to 21.





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## Red flag lowered at Anglers' Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department said today (May 18) that the red flag at Anglers' Beach in Tsuen Wan District has been lowered and the beach has been reopened.

The beach was closed earlier on after an oil spill.

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## Regional flag day today

Three charities have been issued Public Subscription Permits to hold flag sales from 7am to 12.30pm today (May 18). They are, on Hong Kong Island, The Methodist Church, Hong Kong Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre, Social Welfare; in Kowloon, The Industrial Evangelistic Fellowship Limited; and in the New Territories, New Territories Association of Societies (Community Services) Foundation, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

Arrangements have been made with the charities to help people distinguish between the three flag-selling activities.

Information on the three flag-selling organisations on May 18 is as follows:

Region	Name of Organisation	Colour of Collection Bag	Colour of Flag
Hong Kong Island	The Methodist Church, Hong Kong Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre, Social Welfare	Green	White
Kowloon	The Industrial Evangelistic Fellowship Limited	Yellow	White
New Territories	New Territories Association of Societies (Community Services) Foundation	Orange	White

For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the designated hotline of the 1823 Call Centre at 3142 2678. Information on flag days is available at the SWD's website ([www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site\\_whatsnew](http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_whatsnew)) and the GovHK portal ([www.gov.hk/en/theme/fundraising/search](http://www.gov.hk/en/theme/fundraising/search)). Permits for flag days containing contact information of the flag-selling organisations and information on the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website ([www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site\\_pubsvc/page\\_controlofc/sub\\_recentlyap](http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_recentlyap)). For enquiries about the detailed flag-selling arrangements, please contact the individual flag-selling organisations.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities covered by the Public Subscription Permit issued by the SWD have also been uploaded to the GovHK website ([www.gov.hk/fundraising](http://www.gov.hk/fundraising)).

If any flag day activity is suspected to be fraudulent, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.