

Speech by CE at Grand Opening of ASM Pacific Technology Hong Kong Office (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Grand Opening of ASM Pacific Technology Hong Kong Office today (May 6):

Madam Livasiri (Chairman of ASM Pacific Technology, Ms Orasa Livasiri), Mr Lee (Chief Executive Officer of ASM Pacific Technology, Mr Lee Wai Kwong), ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am pleased to be here today for the grand opening of ASM Pacific Technology's new Hong Kong office and research and development (R&D) centre.

Innovation and technology (I&T) is a sector dear to my heart and is among the key policy priorities of this term of Government. And central to building an I&T hub here in Hong Kong is a thriving R&D industry. I am therefore glad that ASM Pacific Technology opens its new R&D centre here today. A Hong Kong-based company, ASM Pacific Technology was founded in 1975.

In those days, very few Hong Kong people talked about technology. After some 40 years, today the company counts more than 16 000 employees in over 30 countries. The new Hong Kong centre employs, I'm told, more than 600 R&D engineers and professionals, with more than 10 per cent of them holding a PhD degree.

A world leader in semiconductor assembly, packaging equipment and materials, and surface mount technology applications, ASM Pacific Technology was named to Thomson Reuters Top 100 Global Technology Leaders list last year, joining distinguished companies like Apple, Alphabet, Microsoft and other I&T giants. In short, ASM Pacific Technology is now a global industry leader – a role model for our start-ups and for our I&T sector as a whole.

My Government is fully committed to promoting I&T. We have, to date, committed around HK\$100 billion of resources to drive I&T development through a variety of policies and programmes. We have also set an ambitious target of increasing total R&D expenditure to 1.5 per cent of our Gross Domestic Product by 2022. But the Government can hardly do it alone. Investing in R&D by private enterprises is essential to achieving our goal and hence we have introduced a super deduction in profits tax for companies' R&D spending.

Talent development is another major factor for a sustainable I&T sector. ASM Pacific Technology is certainly doing its part. The company has been collaborating with our universities and technical colleges, initiating joint projects in new technology R&D. It also offers internships and job placements for local engineering students and graduates. I understand that among the more than 600 engineers working in this new Hong Kong centre,

nearly half are under the age of 30. That's both impressive and inspiring. I look forward to meeting some of them during my tour later and listening to their views on Hong Kong's I&T opportunities and challenges.

Hong Kong's I&T future is, if I may say so, gathering momentum. It's finding shape and sustainability thanks to the confluence and connectivity of numerous critical variables, from our booming start-up sector and superlative educational institutions, to our growing alliances with leading international I&T companies and organisations. Thanks, too, to the offices and R&D centres set up by world-class businesses like ASM Pacific Technology here. I look forward to working with the company and other industry players in promoting I&T development in Hong Kong.

Finally, I wish the company and its new Hong Kong office and R&D centre a long and flourishing future. Thank you.



Four illegal workers jailed

Four illegal workers comprising two Bangladeshis and two Pakistanis were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts on May 3.

During a joint operation conducted by the Immigration Department (ImmD) and the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Powerplayer" on March 18,

enforcement officers raided two recycling sites in Pat Heung. One male Bangladeshi and two male Pakistani illegal workers, aged from 39 to 41, were arrested. When intercepted, they were working as recycling workers. Upon identity checking, they produced for inspection recognisance forms issued by the ImmD, which prohibit them from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that they were non-refoulement claimants.

In addition, during operation "Twilight" on March 6, ImmD investigators raided a restaurant in Tai Wo. One female Bangladeshi illegal worker, aged 34, was arrested. When intercepted she was washing dishes. Upon identity checking, she produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits her from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that she was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was arrested and the legal proceedings are ongoing.

The four illegal workers were charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts on May 3 with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. They pleaded guilty to the charge and were sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening on vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation, with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in

the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

Intellectual Property List in Court of First Instance of High Court to be established

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary announced that the Intellectual Property List in the Court of First Instance of the High Court is established today (May 6).

The spokesman for the Judiciary said, "There has been a demand by the legal profession for the High Court to set up a specialist list on intellectual property (IP) cases. The Judiciary also sees the need to set up such list for better protection of IP rights.

"With the setting up of the List, specialist Judges will be assigned to handle IP cases. Management of the court cases will also be enhanced. This will hopefully reduce the costs and time needed for the resolution of disputes involving IP matters", the spokesman added.

The Judiciary has consulted various stakeholders, including IP practitioners and the legal profession. The responses are positive and they are supportive of the establishment of the List.

A few new or amended Practice Directions (PDs) relating to the detailed operation of the List have come into effect. Interested practitioners and members of the public are welcome to visit the Judiciary's website www.judiciary.hk for details of the PDs.

SFST welcomes annual report of Process Review Panel for Financial Reporting Council

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, today (May 6) welcomed the publication of the 10th annual report of the Process Review Panel (PRP) for the Financial Reporting Council (FRC).

Mr Lau said, "Process review is an important institutional function designed to help enhance the transparency and accountability of the FRC in performing its statutory functions under the Financial Reporting Council Ordinance. In 2018, the PRP conducted a comprehensive review on selected cases handled by the FRC in the preceding year and considered that the actions taken by the FRC were consistent with its internal procedures and guidelines. In the annual report, the PRP has made useful observations and suggestions which are conducive to the further improvement of the work of the FRC.

"I would like to express my gratitude to the PRP Chairman, Dr Anthony Chow, and the members for their dedication in working with the FRC to enhance our financial reporting and corporate governance regime."

Process Review Panel for Financial Reporting Council publishes 2018 report

The following is issued on behalf of the Process Review Panel for the Financial Reporting Council:

The Process Review Panel (PRP) for the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) published its 10th annual report today (May 6), covering the work of the PRP in 2018.

The Chairman of the PRP, Dr Anthony Chow, said, "In the 10th review cycle, the PRP reviewed seven out of the 163 cases handled by the FRC in 2017. These cases are related to possible auditing and reporting irregularities and possible non-compliance with accounting requirements in relation to listed entities in Hong Kong."

Dr Chow added, "After reviewing these cases and considering the reports

by the FRC executives, the PRP concluded that the FRC had handled the cases in accordance with its internal procedures. We are grateful for the co-operation and full support rendered by the FRC in facilitating the work of the Panel and following up our suggestions."

The PRP is an independent panel established on November 1, 2008, to review cases handled by the FRC and consider whether the actions taken by the FRC are consistent with its internal procedures and guidelines. It comprises five members appointed by the Financial Secretary under authority delegated by the Chief Executive, with the FRC Chairman as an ex-officio member.

The full text of the annual report can be downloaded from the website of the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau at www.fstb.gov.hk/fsb/topical/doc/frc_prp_report18_e.pdf.