

73 votes cast in first hour of Yau Tsim Mong District Council by-election

73 electors (1.01 per cent) voted in the first hour of the Yau Tsim Mong District Council Tai Nan Constituency by-election which opened at 7.30am today (March 24). (The voter turnout figures are only for temporary reference.)

One polling station will remain open until 10.30pm today for 7 257 registered electors in the constituency to cast their votes. It is located at the Fresh Fish Traders' School, 33 Sycamore Street, Tai Kok Tsui, Kowloon.

A dedicated polling station has been set up at Cheung Sha Wan Police Station, 880 Lai Chi Kok Road, Kowloon for electors in the Tai Nan Constituency who are remanded or detained by law enforcement agencies other than the Correctional Services Department (CSD) to cast their votes. The polling hours are from 7.30am to 10.30pm.

Electors in the constituency who are imprisoned or remanded in the CSD's custody can cast their votes at three dedicated polling stations set up at their respective penal institutions. For security reasons, the polling hours are from 9am to 4pm.

The Chairman of the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC), Mr Justice Barnabas Fung Wah, Commission members Mr Arthur Luk, SC, and Professor Fanny Cheung, will visit the polling station this morning.

"Electors are advised to cast their votes as early as possible and read carefully the address of the designated polling station on their poll cards indicating where they should cast their votes," a spokesman for the Registration and Electoral Office said.

"Electors must bring the original of their Hong Kong identity card or other specified alternative documents to the designated polling station to collect their ballot paper to cast vote. Voting is very simple. Electors must use the chop provided by the polling stations to stamp the ballot paper with a tick in the circle opposite the name of the chosen candidate, and fold the ballot paper inward in half before putting it into the ballot box," he said.

Once the poll is closed, the polling station at the Fresh Fish Traders' School will be converted into counting station. The public will be able to watch the vote counting within the designated area at the counting station.

To protect the secrecy of votes, the ballot boxes at the dedicated polling stations will be delivered to the counting station at the Fresh Fish Traders' School for opening after the close of polling. The ballot papers concerned will be mixed with the ballot papers cast at the Fresh Fish Traders' School before counting.

The election result will be announced at the counting station at the

Fresh Fish Traders' School.

An election hotline (2891 1001) is in service until 11pm to answer enquiries relating to the by-election.

A complaints hotline (2827 7251) is also in operation until 11pm to handle complaints about breaches of electoral rules or guidelines.

The two candidates contesting this by-election are Lee Kwok Kuen (No. 1) and Li Sze Man (No. 2).

Fatal traffic accident in Ma On Shan

Police are investigating a fatal traffic accident in Ma On Shan in the small hours of today (March 24) in which a 60-year-old man died.

At about 2.53am, a private car driven by a 40-year-old man was travelling along Tolo Highway towards Tai Po. When approaching Hong Kong Science Park, it reportedly rammed into a kerb and stopped. An MGV driven by a 37-year-old man later collided with the private car.

After the impact, a 60-year-old MGV passenger fell out from the vehicle. Sustaining serious head injuries, he was certified dead at scene. The MGV driver and a 39-year-old male passenger sustained minor injuries and were sent to the Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital in conscious state. The MGV driver was later transferred to Prince of Wales Hospital for treatment.

The private car driver and the MGV driver were arrested for drink driving and dangerous driving causing death respectively. They are being detained for further enquiries.

Investigation by the Special Investigation Team of Traffic, New Territories North is underway.

Anyone who witnessed the accident or has any information to offer is urged to contact the investigating officers on 3661 3800.

Red flags hoisted at some beaches

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 (March 24) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Stanley Main Beach and Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Red flag hoisted at Silverstrand 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 (March 24) that due to big waves, red flag has been hoisted at Silverstrand Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

Speech by CS at 47th Hong Kong Arts Festival Finale Ceremony (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, at a toasting ceremony for the 47th Hong Kong Arts Festival Finale Ceremony at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre this evening (March 23):

Mr Cha (Chairman of the Hong Kong Arts Festival Society Limited, Mr Victor Cha), Mr Cheung (Executive Director, Charities and Community of the Hong Kong Jockey Club, Mr Cheung Leong), Ms Gao (Chairman and Executive Director of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited, Ms Gao Ming), Tisa (Executive Director of the Hong Kong Arts Festival Society Limited, Ms Tisa Ho), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. It gives me great pleasure to join you all tonight at the Festival Finale of the 47th Hong Kong Arts Festival. First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Festival on another year of great success.

The Hong Kong Arts Festival, the first of its kind in the territory, has

delighted audiences with a wide array of splendid performances and programmes since 1973, and contributed greatly to the development of Hong Kong into an arts and cultural metropolis. In the past month, the Festival has presented a total of 166 performances, including 15 world premieres and 16 Asian premieres, as well as about 420 PLUS and educational activities, attracting an attendance of over 300 000 people with more than 90 per cent of tickets sold. Many international and local artists in the performing arts gathered here for the Festival and brought a blend of traditional and creative programmes to all art lovers in the region.

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region attaches great importance to the development of arts and culture in Hong Kong, and makes every endeavour to allocate more resources to the local arts and cultural sector. The latest Budget proposes the allocation an additional funding of \$176 million for hosting large-scale world-class performing arts programmes and arranging telecasts of selected mega shows in different places across the territory in the next five years. The Budget also proposes that subvention for arts groups including the Hong Kong Arts Festival Society Limited in the year of 2019-20 will increase by \$54 million, with the aim of presenting more arts productions to enrich the cultural life of our city.

Furthermore, the West Kowloon Cultural District, one of the largest cultural icons in the region, is set to create a vibrant cultural quarter for Hong Kong and foster interaction, collaboration and development of the local arts scene. Following the grand opening of the Xiqu Centre this January, other major facilities in the West Kowloon Cultural District will be coming on stream in the next 24 months.

In the next few years, some strategic cultural projects such as the New Territories East Cultural Centre and the Heritage Conservation and Resource Centre will also commence operation. I believe that, with the successive completion of major cultural projects in town and the Government's continuous funding support for local arts groups, the development of arts and culture in Hong Kong will reach a new milestone.

However, to enable the arts and cultural sector to thrive, your staunch support, in addition to Government's efforts, is surely a determining factor. I really appreciate the sterling contribution from and support of all participating parties, without which the Festival cannot be a success. I would also like to pay tribute to sponsors and patrons for their generosity, particularly the sustained support of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust over the years and the full support of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited for the Festival Finale for seven years in a row.

Now, please join me in a toast to the success of the 47th Hong Kong Arts Festival.

Cheers!

