

Two parents convicted of failure to register births within prescribed period

Two Hong Kong residents who failed to register the births of their children within the prescribed period were convicted at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (October 4) and today (October 5) respectively.

The Immigration Department (ImmD) investigated the two cases of failure to register birth within the prescribed period, which involved two males who failed to register the births of their new born babies who were both born in October 2017. The two were charged with failure to perform the birth registration of a baby within 42 days after birth. They both pleaded guilty to the charge and were sentenced to fines of \$1,200 and \$1,000 respectively. The birth registration of the two babies was finally completed in July 2018.

The ImmD spokesman reminded the public that parents must fulfil their obligations under the law to register the birth of a child within 42 days of birth, so that the rights to medical treatment, education and welfare benefits, to which their children are entitled, are not affected due to the delay in following the relevant procedures. Failure to do so is an offence for which the maximum sentence upon summary conviction is a fine of \$2,000 or six months' imprisonment.

“Sparkle! Journal of a City Foot Soldier” exhibition reflects on urbanism

The "Sparkle! Journal of a City Foot Soldier" exhibition organised by Oi! was unveiled today (October 5) at Oi! in North Point. Through works of art, literature and research, visitors are invited to explore urbanism from different perspectives, thus enabling a wider spectrum of reflection on the concept of the city and urban living.

For the seventh exhibition of the "Sparkle!" series, artist and landscape architect Sara Wong was invited to be the project curator. The exhibits on display include Francis Alÿs' "Railings", Gordon Matta-Clark's "Reality Properties: Fake Estate, 'Rego Park' (cement parking), Block 3165, Lot 155", Lam Tung-pang's "Diary of The Curiosity Box (Hong Kong) – Hometown Tourist pp.1-10", Kate Lau's "One day we walk together separately", Melissa

Cate Christ and Susanne Trumpf's "Selections from the Hong Kong Stair Archive", and Fabian Gutscher and Wu Jiaru's "Walking Together Alone".

During the exhibition, a reading room is available for the public to read urban research and literary works about the exploration of cities, allowing visitors to enhance their understanding of the topic.

The exhibition has free admission and runs until January 6 next year. For details of the exhibition, please visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/Museum/AP0/en_US/web/apo/sparkle_journal_of_a_city_foot_soldier.html or call 2512 3000.

For the "Sparkle!" exhibition series, eight local artists, namely Movana Chen, Enoch Cheng, Tang Siu-wa, Jeff Leung, Solomon Yu, Yentl Tong, Sara Wong and Anthony Leung, were invited to use Oi! as a platform to plan and stage exhibitions and other events that showcase the artistic qualities of the young generation. Focusing on the relationship between art and contemporary living, the artists reflect on pressing issues in life and society using various means of artistic expression.

Oi! is located at 12 Oil Street, North Point.

HKMC's financial results highlights for first half of 2018

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited (HKMC) today (October 5) announced the highlights of its unaudited consolidated financial results for the first six months of 2018 (1H 2018) as follows:

2018 Half-Year Financial Results Highlights

- Unaudited consolidated profit after tax was HK\$256 million (1H 2017: HK\$578 million);
- Annualised return on shareholders' equity was 4.1% (1H 2017: 12.6% (Note 1));
- Cost-to-income ratio was 41.8% (1H 2017: 19% (Note 1)); and
- Capital adequacy ratio was 26.6% as at June 30, 2018 (December 31, 2017: 21%).

2018 Half-Year Business Performance Highlights

Asset Purchase

- Purchased HK\$5 million loan assets (1H 2017: HK\$19 million); and
- Outstanding principal balance of the loan portfolio was HK\$6.9 billion as at June 30, 2018 (December 31, 2017: HK\$7.8 billion).

Debt Issuance

- Issued in total HK\$10.4 billion corporate debts (Note 2) (1H 2017: HK\$14.3 billion), being a major and active corporate debt issuer in Hong Kong;
- Outstanding balance of debt securities was HK\$35.9 billion as at June 30, 2018 (December 31, 2017: HK\$34.8 billion); and
- Credit ratings of AA+ from S&P Global Ratings and Aa2 from Moody's, same as those of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government.

Mortgage Insurance Programme (MIP)

- New mortgage loans drawn down amounted to HK\$18.9 billion (1H 2017: HK\$15.9 billion); and
- 90% of loans drawn down (in terms of loan amount) were secured on properties in the secondary market, demonstrating the importance of the MIP to homebuyers in the secondary market.

SME Financing Guarantee Scheme

- Approved 851 applications under the Special Concessionary Measures (i.e. the 80% guarantee product) with a total loan amount of approximately HK\$3.6 billion (91% of the benefitted borrowers since the launch of the 80% guarantee product were small and medium enterprises with less than 50 employees each).

Reverse Mortgage Programme

- Approved 323 applications under the Reverse Mortgage Programme, with an average property value of HK\$5.2 million and an average monthly payout of HK\$14,000.

Further details of the HKMC's unaudited consolidated financial results and financial review for 1H 2018 are set out at the Annex.

Note 1: For better comparison, the adjusted annualised return on shareholders' equity and cost-to-income ratio for the six months ended June 30, 2017 would be 5.4% and 35.5% respectively after excluding the exceptional gains of HK\$210 million on disposal of available-for-sale investments arising from portfolio rebalancing and exchange gain of HK\$129 million mainly from the US dollar exposures in cash and debt investments.

Note 2: For debts with tenor of one year or above.

Sixteen immigration offenders arrested (with photo)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a series of territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations, including an operation codenamed "Twilight" and joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion", from October 2 to 4. A total of 13 illegal workers and three suspected employers were arrested.

During operation "Twilight", ImmD Task Force officers raided 314 target locations including a commercial building, construction sites, a frozen meat shop, residential flats, restaurants, a tailor shop and village houses. Eleven illegal workers and three employers were arrested. The illegal workers comprised three men and eight women, aged 34 to 53. Among them, two women were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. Furthermore, one man and five women were suspected of using and being in possession of forged Hong Kong identity cards. Meanwhile, two men and a woman, aged 27 to 44, were suspected of employing the illegal workers.

In addition, during operation "Champion", enforcement officers raided 10 target locations in Tsing Yi and Kwai Chung including a car park, a recycling shop, industrial buildings and commercial buildings. Two illegal workers comprising a man and a woman, aged 30 and 51, were arrested. Among them, the man was a holder of a recognisance form, which prohibits him from taking any employment.

"Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties," an ImmD spokesman said.

The 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. It is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are

liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

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 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 of 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.



Four Hong Kong productions featured at Zurich Film Festival (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Berlin (HKETO Berlin) is continuing to support the Hong Kong film industry by once again sponsoring the Zurich Film Festival in Switzerland. The film festival is running from September 27 to October 7 (Zurich time) and welcoming around 100 000 visitors from around the world. Four new Hong Kong productions are featured in the dedicated "Window: Hong Kong" section, and noted Hong Kong filmmaker Ann Hui is serving as a jury member and will teach a master class session for aspiring filmmakers.

This year's "Window: Hong Kong" features a variety of films showcasing talents from Hong Kong: Wilson Yip's "Paradox", which won this year's Asian Film Award for Best Action Film; "The Empty Hands" by Chapman To, which is characterised by its dry humour; Simon Chung's "I Miss You When I See You", a story of love and loneliness; and Ann Hui's historical drama "Our Time Will Come", which was celebrated at the Hong Kong Film Awards 2018 with awards for Best Film and Best Director.

Ann Hui also attended the Hong Kong Reception on October 3 (Zurich time) in the Festival Centre, where the Director of HKETO Berlin, Mr Bill Li, highlighted the importance of the film industry for Hong Kong's development as a value-added and diversified economy. "We will promote further development of the local film industry, and nurture more talents. We also welcome film production professionals from around the world including Switzerland to work in Hong Kong," he said, making reference to the recently published Talent List of Hong Kong.

Guests of the reception were then invited to join the screening of "Our Time Will Come" with the attendance of director Ann Hui, who provided an introduction. Hui is also a member of the international feature film jury of the Zurich Film Festival, which will present the Golden Eye Awards tomorrow (October 6, Zurich time). On the same day, she will teach a master class for aspiring film directors, scriptwriters and producers and discuss work methods with talents seeking the unique opportunity to explore new ideas of filmmaking and storytelling.

Apart from continuing its co-operation with the Zurich Film Festival, HKETO Berlin has also arranged screenings of Hong Kong movies at the Jameson CineFest International Film Festival in Miskolc, Hungary in September, and will support Hong Kong film industry at the Vienna International Film Festival (Viennale) in Austria later this month.

About HKETO Berlin

HKETO Berlin is the official Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government representative in commercial relations and other economic and

trade matters in Switzerland as well as Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia.

