

Missing man in Sham Shui Po located

A man who went missing in Sham Shui Po has been located.

Lau Lap-sun, aged 18, went missing after he left his residence in Pak Tin Estate on September 23 afternoon. His family made a report to Police on the same day.

Police located the man on Aberdeen Praya Road yesterday (September 25) afternoon. He sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

SUCCESS to hold seminar on "Secrets on Enterprise Human Capital Management"

The Support and Consultation Centre for SMEs (SUCCESS) of the Trade and Industry Department will hold a seminar entitled "Secrets on Enterprise Human Capital Management" on October 3 (Wednesday).

Successful companies are good not just at financial management but also at human capital management. In recent years, the unemployment rate has remained at a low level with different industries all looking for talented individuals. Due to resource constraints, it is difficult for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to compete for talent using favorable terms. Instead, they have to master human capital management to avoid talent loss and undesirable impact on business development. This seminar has invited three business executives to share the secrets and practical experience of human capital management. Representative of the Employees Retraining Board will also introduce their free services for SMEs.

The speakers will include the Manager (Industry Services) of Employees Retraining Board, Mr Herman Kung; the Head of Talent Management of JTH Group, Mr Tommy Lo; the Deputy Head of Learning & Development of Swire Resources Limited, Ms Leona Tse; and the Chairman of Success Base Group, Mr Ringo Ng.

The seminar will be held at 2.30pm in the Lecture Theatre, G/F, Hong Kong Central Library, 66 Causeway Road, Causeway Bay (MTR Tin Hau Station, Exit B). The seminar will be conducted in Cantonese. Admission is free.

Those interested are invited to register with SUCCESS by October 2 (Tuesday). Please visit the SUCCESS website (www.success.tid.gov.hk/tid/eng/activity/activity.jsp) for details of the

seminar and online registration. The registration form can also be downloaded from the SUCCESS website. Please send the completed registration form to SUCCESS by fax (2391 7375). Due to limited seating capacity, seats will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

For enquiries, please call 3403 6111.

Three illegal workers jailed

Three illegal workers comprising two Pakistanis and a Vietnamese were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts on September 24.

During an anti-illegal worker operation mounted on July 27, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided a warehouse in Tseung Kwan O. Two male Pakistani illegal workers, aged 29 and 41, were arrested. When intercepted, they were both unloading goods. 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 September 20, ImmD investigators raided a restaurant in Tai Wai. One female Vietnamese illegal worker, aged 44, was arrested. When intercepted, she was performing dish washing duty. 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. She was also suspected of using and being in possession of a forged identity card. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The three illegal workers were charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts on September 24 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 charges and they were sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. In addition, one of them was also charged with one count of using a forged Hong Kong identity card. She was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment of which part of the sentence is to run consecutively, making a total of 18 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 also warned that it is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or an identity card relating 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 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 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.

Hong Kong once again regarded as freest economy in the world

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government today (September 26) welcomed that the Fraser Institute once again ranked Hong Kong as the freest economy in the world in the Economic Freedom of the World 2018 Annual Report. Among the five areas of assessment, Hong Kong was ranked top in

"Freedom to Trade Internationally" and "Regulation".

"The hard-earned results vividly reflect Hong Kong's steadfast commitment to building a free economy with a level playing field," a government spokesman said.

"The Government will continue to build a robust institutional framework, uphold the fine tradition of rule of law and maintain an efficient government, so as to provide a level playing field. This should provide a favourable environment for our economy to thrive," the spokesman said.

"The press release of the Fraser Institute states that there is a concern about the rule of law in Hong Kong, on which we do not agree. We must point out that there are no objective facts showing that the rule of law or judicial independence in Hong Kong has been subject to any interference. Judicial independence is the bedrock of Hong Kong's economic freedoms and is protected by the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The court system in Hong Kong is as transparent as ever and justice is impartial in Hong Kong. Hearings are generally held in open court and the media are free to report on proceedings while reasoned judgments are accessible on the Judiciary's website. The rule of law, including judicial independence, is alive and well in Hong Kong. Judicial independence is pivotal to Hong Kong's continuous success as the world's freest economy. We have faith in the rule of law and judicial independence in Hong Kong, and will strive to enhance the proper understanding of the international community in this respect through different channels," the spokesman added.

SCED: Hong Kong will continue to be an open market (with photos)

Hong Kong has long been and will continue to be an open market, founded upon strong rule of law, civil liberties and government transparency. Furthermore, Hong Kong is a staunch supporter of free trade and will continue to defend the multilateral trading system in the interests of global economic growth, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said in Washington, DC, the United States (US) today (September 25, Eastern Standard Time).

Speaking at a gala reception and dinner hosted by Cathay Pacific Airways Limited to mark its inaugural direct flight between Hong Kong and Washington, DC, Mr Yau said that Hong Kong has always been a strong and important trade partner of the US. American businesses can capitalise on Hong Kong's strengths as an open market, a springboard to Asia and as a partner for innovation for exploring markets, he added.

Before the gala reception and dinner, Mr Yau had a bilateral meeting with the US Secretary of Commerce, Mr Wilbur Ross, to exchange views on US-Hong Kong trade and economic relations. He told Mr Ross that the strong tradition of rule of law, low levels of corruption, highly efficient business environment, a world-class infrastructure and highly professional services make Hong Kong a preferred platform for business and investment activities from the US. He also pointed out that a business delegation with representatives from major chambers of commerce and individual companies had also joined his visit to Washington, DC to strengthen government-to-government and business-to-business partnership between both sides.

After the meeting, Mr Yau witnessed the signing of Statement of Intent on Smart Technology Collaboration between the US Department of Commerce and the Hong Kong Productivity Council. The collaborative agreement represents a new milestone in commercial activities between Hong Kong and the US.

In the morning, Mr Yau met separately with the Deputy US Trade Representative for Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Industrial Competitiveness, Mr Jeffrey Gerrish, and Senator Steve Daines, to update them on the latest economic and trade developments in Hong Kong and to exchange views on Hong Kong-US trade relations. During the meeting with Mr Gerrish, he reiterated that as a founding member of the World Trade Organization, Hong Kong strongly supports the multilateral trading system and free trade.

In the afternoon, after attending a luncheon organised by US-China Business Council, Mr Yau met with the founder of the Heritage Foundation, Dr Edwin Feulner. He welcomed the Heritage Foundation's recognition of Hong Kong as the world's freest economy for the 24th consecutive year, and was pleased to note that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government's steadfast commitment in upholding the free market principles has always been affirmed internationally.

Mr Yau will continue his visit programmes in Washington, DC tomorrow (September 26, Eastern Standard Time).



