

EDB reminds schools and parents to get prepared for class resumption tomorrow

The Education Bureau (EDB) has announced that classes will resume tomorrow (September 19) as schools are generally ready after the cleaning and repair works of their premises and facilities in the past two days.

If individual schools consider that it is necessary to continue to suspend their classes tomorrow because of the conditions of the school premises or other reasons, they may proceed after consulting the respective District School Development Sections/Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres of the EDB. Schools are required to inform all school staff, parents, students and relevant parties of the decision and related arrangements as soon as possible in accordance with their school-based contingency plans. Schools should also make suitable arrangements to cater for the learning needs of students during the extended class suspension period.

Parents should pay attention to the safety of their children. If the road and traffic conditions in the vicinity have yet to return to normal, they may let their children stay at home. For students who are late for school because of traffic problems and/or those who are temporarily absent because of their parents' decisions, schools should exercise discretion in handling these cases and the students concerned should not be penalised.

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected dangerous drugs (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (September 17) seized about 2.2 kilograms of suspected methamphetamine and about 270 grams of suspected ketamine with an estimated market value of about \$1.3 million in Cheung Sha Wan.

During an anti-narcotics operation in Cheung Sha Wan yesterday afternoon, Customs officers intercepted a man and found about 2.2kg of suspected methamphetamine inside a paper bag carried by him. The 29-year-old man was then arrested.

After follow-up investigation, the arrested man was escorted to a residential premises nearby where about 270g of suspected ketamine and a batch of drug packaging paraphernalia were further seized.

Investigation is ongoing.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to the Customs 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



Illegal worker jailed

A Bangladeshi worker holding a recognisance form was jailed at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (September 17).

Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators received a referral from the Hong Kong Police Force to further investigate an illegal employment case in August. Enforcement officers arrested a male Bangladeshi worker, aged 40, was found working as odd-job worker in a flat under renovation in Yuen Long. Upon identity checking, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday 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. He pleaded guilty to the charge and was 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 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.

Veteran Cantonese opera stars and young talents to perform three Guan Hanqing plays in “Four Generations on Stage”

Veteran Cantonese opera stars Chan Ho-kau, Yau Sing-po and Yuen Siu-fai will collaborate with other Cantonese opera performers and talented young actors in an upcoming production entitled "Four Generations on Stage".

Each performance will showcase three of Guan Hanqing's plays, which have been adapted for Cantonese opera playlets by the acclaimed Cantonese opera

artist Yuen Siu-fai. Details of the performances are as follows:

November 4 (Sunday) 7.30pm
Auditorium, Tuen Mun Town Hall
Ticket: \$120, \$180, \$240 and \$300

November 19 (Monday) 7.30pm
Auditorium, Kwai Tsing Theatre
Ticket: \$120, \$220, \$300 and \$380

December 3 (Monday) 7.30pm
Auditorium, Sha Tin Town Hall
Ticket: \$120, \$220, \$300 and \$380

The first short play, "Saving a Prostitute", follows a courtesan named Song Yinzhang who pledges her love for scholar An Xiushi. But, lured by the sweet talk of a rogue called Zhou She, Song Yinzhang marries Zhou She instead, despite the disapproval of her confidante, Zhao Paner. After marriage, Song Yinzhang suffers from the abusive Zhou She, and seeks help from Zhao Paner. Zhao Paner then devises a scheme to trick Zhou She into divorcing Song Yinzhang. With the divorce letter, Song Yinzhang is free. An Xiushi and Song Yinzhang finally become husband and wife.

The second short play, "The Riverside Pavilion", follows a scholar official, Bai Shizhong, who meets a widow, Tan Jier, and the two are married. But Yang the Court Officer wants to have Tan Jier for himself, so he lies to the Emperor to obtain an imperial decree and a sword to have Bai Shizhong executed. Tan Jier disguises herself as a fishmonger and meets Yang the Court Officer at the Riverside Pavilion. Tan Jier flirts with him and gets him drunk, then escapes with the imperial decree and the sword. Yang's fraudulent claim is discovered and his official title is taken away.

The third short play, "Meeting the Enemies Alone", is set in the Three Kingdoms period. To demand the return of Jingzhou to the Wu Kingdom, Lu Su invites Guan Yu to a banquet across the river where an ambush is waiting. Knowing very well that it is a set-up, Guan Yu goes to the banquet with his attendant Zhou Cang, while his sons Guan Ping and Guan Xing stand by as reinforcements near the river. At the banquet, Guan Yu and Lu Su confront each other with their weapons after a few drinks. When Lu Su loses, Guan Yu takes him hostage on his boat, so that Lu Su dares not order his ambushers to attack. Guan Yu returns to his camp unscathed.

In addition to the three veteran stars, the cast includes Szeto Chui-ying, Ng Lap-hei, Li Qiuyuan, Lee Lung, Chui Yuet-ming, Chan Wing-yee, Tong Yuen-ying, Kwok Chun-sing, Leung Wai-hong, Cheung Kit-ha, Wan Yuk-yu, Jim Ho-fung, Sun Kim-long, Loong Koon-tin and Lo Lai-see.

"Four Generations on Stage" is presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. Tickets are now available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7325 or visit

www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/chinese_opera/programs_618.html.

A post-performance talk (in Cantonese) will be held at 7.30pm on December 11 (Tuesday) at AC2, Level 4, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Speakers will include Yuen Siu-fai, Li Qiuyuan and Wan Yuk-yu, and the moderator is Barbara Tang. Admission is free with limited seats available on a first-come, first-served basis.

LCSD swimming pools open as usual

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 (September 18) that except for Hammer Hill Road Swimming Pool in Wong Tai Sin District, the public swimming pools which were closed earlier on due to urgent clearance work after the typhoon have been opened as usual today.