

Very Hot Weather Warning issued

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning.

To prevent heat stroke, avoid prolonged activities outdoors.

If engaged in outdoor work or activities, wear a wide-brimmed hat and light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes. Stay in shaded areas as much as possible.

Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages containing caffeine or alcohol.

If you feel sick, consult a doctor right away.

Red flag hoisted at Hap Mun Bay 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 (July 17) that due to big waves, the red flag has been hoisted at Hap Mun Bay Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

Missing woman in Kwai Chung located

A woman who went missing in Kwai Chung has been located.

Pang Chui-ying, aged 30, went missing after she left a rehabilitation centre on Tai Loong Street on July 11 morning. Staff of the centre made a report to Police on July 12 afternoon.

The woman returned to the rehabilitation centre yesterday afternoon (July 16).

Free theatre show “To Love Red Noses – Romeo & Juliet” to be held at Tsuen Wan Town Hall

The clown theatre production "To Love Red Noses – Romeo & Juliet" will be held on July 20 and 21 (Friday and Saturday) at 2.30pm and 4.30pm at the Tsuen Wan Town Hall Auditorium. The show will be conducted in Cantonese with free admission on a first-come, first-served basis. No tickets are required.

The show, produced and performed by POP Theatre, is an adaptation of Shakespeare's famous work "Romeo and Juliet". It features selected scenes from the original drama and blends the romantic tragedy with clown theatre to create a lively, interactive production. Audiences may also experience theatrical arts in a fresh way through the interactive sessions during the show.

In addition, free activities such as a Parent-Child Storytelling Workshop and Painting on Fingers will also be held for public enjoyment.

"To Love Red Noses – Romeo & Juliet", a supporting programme of the large-scale summer festival International Arts Carnival, is presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. For enquiries, please call 2591 1340, or visit the website at www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/eo/territoryevents/internationalarts/iac2018.html.

Ombudsman probes Leisure and Cultural Services Department's allocation of swimming lanes in public swimming pools and its monitoring mechanism (with photo)

The following is issued on behalf of the Office of The Ombudsman:

The Ombudsman, Ms Connie Lau, today (July 17) announced a direct investigation into the mechanism of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) for allocating swimming lanes in public swimming pools to

examine whether the mechanism is effective and the department has fulfilled its responsibility as the monitoring authority.

To promote sports development and training, the LCSD assigns certain time slots of some swimming lanes in its public swimming pools to six sports associations for training and examination purposes. These associations then allocate the lanes to their affiliated clubs.

Recently, there were media reports about unfairness in some sports associations' systems for allocating swimming lanes, resulting in undue advantage to the large-scale affiliated clubs at the expense of the smaller clubs. Moreover, there were allegations of irregularities such as transfer of benefits and violation of conditions of use.

A preliminary inquiry by the Office of The Ombudsman revealed that under the Central Lane Allocation Scheme that the LCSD has implemented since 2005, the LCSD will give priority and allocate swimming lanes to the aforesaid sports associations, which will then allocate the lanes to their affiliated clubs based on the associations' own rating systems. Nevertheless, there are queries on whether the LCSD has fulfilled its monitoring responsibilities to ensure that the rating systems are reasonable and those affiliated clubs are genuinely non-profit-making, and whether there are improper transfers of the right to use the swimming lanes.

Ms Lau said, "The Government has a duty to promote and support sports development. It is understandable that the Government has given priority and allocates some swimming lanes to several sports associations for their training and examination uses. However, as swimming lanes are valuable public resources, the Government must ensure good use of the limited recreational and sports facilities to meet public demands and balance the interests of different parties. When the LCSD gives those sports associations priority and grants them the right to allocate some swimming lanes, the department must ensure that the public resources are properly used. For instance, the LCSD should check if any of the swimming clubs currently using the swimming lanes have engaged in improper profit-making activities and violated the conditions of use. Whether the LCSD has properly delivered its monitoring duties and taken due follow-up action therefore warrants our thorough investigation."

The ambit of this direct investigation covers:

- (1) whether the LCSD's mechanism for allocating swimming lanes in public swimming pools is effective;
- (2) whether the LCSD has sufficient monitoring of sports associations' allocation of those lanes among their affiliated clubs;
- (3) whether the LCSD has sufficient monitoring of swimming clubs' compliance with the conditions of use of those lanes; and
- (4) any areas for improvement.

The Ombudsman now invites members of the public to send their views in writing to the Office of The Ombudsman by September 17, 2018:

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