

Extension of opening hours of four public libraries on trial basis

To promote reading in the community, the Hong Kong Public Libraries of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will launch a three-month trial scheme from July 1 to October 1, extending the opening hours of the following four designated public libraries on Sundays and public holidays. Details are as follows:

	Original opening hours	Opening hours during the trial period
Hong Kong Central Library		
Sundays	10am to 9pm	10am to 9pm (remains unchanged)
Public holidays	10am to 7pm	10am to 8pm
Hong Kong Island – Smithfield Public Library (small library)		
Sundays	10am to 5pm	10am to 8pm
Public holidays	10am to 1pm	
Kowloon – Lai Chi Kok Public Library including Students' Study Room (district library)		
Sundays and public holidays	9am to 5pm	9am to 8pm
New Territories – Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Public Library including Students' Study Room (major library)		
Sundays and public holidays	9am to 5pm	9am to 8pm

"After considering factors such as the library usage statistics, the public demand for services and the availability of supporting facilities, the above-mentioned four public libraries of different regions and types are selected for the trial scheme," an LCSD spokesperson said.

"Upon completion of the trial scheme, the LCSD will conduct a review to assess the cost-effectiveness, feasibility, operational arrangements, long-term manpower and financial implications of the new service hours," the spokesman added.

For details, please refer to the attachment or visit www.hkpl.gov.hk.

Temporary traffic and transport arrangements at Tate's Cairn Tunnel on June 23 and 24

The Transport Department (TD) today (June 15) reminded members of the public that to facilitate road repair work at the Tate's Cairn Tunnel, the following temporary traffic and transport arrangements will be implemented at the Tate's Cairn Tunnel from 10pm on June 23 (Saturday) to 6am on June 24 (Sunday):

(i) The slow lane of the Tate's Cairn Tunnel (Kowloon bound) from its toll plaza to its Kowloon exit, and the slip road leading from the Kowloon exit to Hammer Hill Road and Lung Cheung Road, will be closed to all vehicular traffic;

(ii) Vehicles from the Tate's Cairn Tunnel Kowloon bound exit heading for Hammer Hill Road and Lung Cheung Road eastbound will be temporarily diverted; and

(iii) KMB routes No. 74D, 74X, 75X, 80X, 82X, 83X, 84M, 85M, 88, 89C, 89D, 89X, 277X and 286M heading for Kowloon will be diverted from 9.30pm on June 23 to 6am on June 24. The bus stop on Choi Hung Road westbound near Sze Mei Street serving KMB routes No. 82X and 85M will be temporarily relocated.

Due to the lane closure, the TD anticipates that the traffic at the Tate's Cairn Tunnel will be relatively busy during the above period. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience when passing through the road sections concerned and consider using alternative routes. Appropriate traffic signs will be erected on-site to guide motorists.

Members of the public are advised to use railway services or bus services via the Lion Rock Tunnel or the Tsing Sha Highway to Kowloon. They are also advised to plan their journey in advance and allow more travelling time to avoid unexpected delay.

The TD and the tunnel operator will closely monitor the traffic situation and implement appropriate traffic and transport measures whenever necessary. Members of the public are advised to stay alert to the latest traffic news on radio and television.

Details of the temporary traffic and transport arrangements are now

available on the TD's website (www.td.gov.hk).

Three illegal workers jailed

Three illegal workers comprising a Nigerien, a Pakistani and a Vietnamese, were jailed at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (June 14).

During operation "Twilight" conducted on May 7 and 8, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided stalls in Mong Kok and a restaurant in Tseung Kwan o respectively. A male Nigerien illegal worker, a male Pakistani illegal worker and a male Vietnamese illegal worker, aged 30 to 37, were arrested. When intercepted they were setting up stalls and performing kitchen work. 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. Meanwhile, 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 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. After the trial, they were sentenced to imprisonment ranging from 15 months to 16 months.

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.

Auction of traditional vehicle registration marks to be held on June 30

The Transport Department today (June 15) announced that the auction of traditional vehicle registration marks will be held on June 30 (Saturday), in Meeting Room S421, L4, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 280 vehicle registration marks will be put up for public auction. The list of marks has been posted at the department's website, www.td.gov.hk," a department spokesman said.

Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$1,000 to reserve a mark for auction should also participate in the bidding (including the first bid at the reserve price of \$1,000). Otherwise, the mark may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following important points:

(a) Successful bidders are required to produce the following documents for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after the successful bidding:

- (1) the identity document of the successful bidder;
- (2) the identity document of the purchaser if it is different from the successful bidder;

- (3) a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation if the purchaser is a body corporate; and
- (4) a crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". (For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed.) Successful bidders can also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS). Payment by post-dated cheques, cash or other methods will not be accepted.
- (b) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of Registration Mark immediately after the bidding. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the memorandum will not be permitted.
- (c) A vehicle registration mark can only be assigned to a motor vehicle which is registered in the name of the purchaser. The Certificate of Incorporation must be produced immediately by the purchaser if a vehicle registration mark purchased is to be registered under the name of a body corporate.
- (d) Special registration marks are non-transferable. Where the ownership of a motor vehicle with a special registration mark is transferred, the allocation of the special registration mark shall be cancelled.
- (e) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the registration mark to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the registration mark within 12 months, allocation of the mark will be cancelled and arranged for re-allocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of Vehicle Registration Marks, which can be downloaded from the department's website, www.td.gov.hk.

Temporary traffic and transport arrangements on North Lantau Highway and Cheung Tung Road

The Transport Department (TD) today (June 15) reminded the public that temporary traffic and transport arrangements will be implemented on the North Lantau Highway and Cheung Tung Road next Wednesday (June 20) and Thursday (June 21) from 11.30pm to 5.30am of the following day to facilitate road works of the Tuen Mun – Chek Lap Kok Link Southern Connection Viaduct

Section.

The temporary traffic and transport arrangements will mainly include:

Lane closure

Traffic lanes on the following road sections will be intermittently closed on June 20 and 21 from 11.30pm to 5.30am of the following day:

1. The section of the North Lantau Highway (Kowloon bound and Tung Chung bound) between Caribbean Coast and Pak Mong;
2. The section of Cheung Tung Road (Kowloon bound) between Tat Tung Road and Siu Ho Wan Depot; and
3. The section of Cheung Tung Road (Tung Chung bound) between Siu Ho Wan Depot and Pak Mong.

Public transport services

A total of 41 bus routes and two Residents' Service routes operating in the affected areas will be temporarily diverted. The public transport operators concerned will display notices to advise passengers of the above temporary arrangements.

Appropriate traffic signs will be erected on-site to guide motorists. The TD anticipates that the traffic on the roads concerned will be affected during the period. In case of traffic congestion, motorists should exercise tolerance and patience, and follow instructions of the Police. The TD and the Police will closely monitor the traffic situation and implement appropriate measures whenever necessary. Members of the public are advised to stay alert to the latest traffic news on radio and television.

Information on the temporary traffic and transport arrangements is also available at the TD's website (www.td.gov.hk). Please call 1823 for enquiries.