

Speech by CE at Swedish Midsummer and National Day Celebration (English only)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Swedish Midsummer and National Day Celebration today (June 8):

Consul General (Consul General of Sweden in Hong Kong, Ms Helena Storm), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

What a pleasure to be here today in celebration of Sweden's national day and its midsummer festival, the country's most traditional of holidays. First of all, my gratitude to the Consul General and your team for opening this fantastic celebration to the people of Hong Kong. It provides an excellent opportunity for our people to appreciate the rich culture of Sweden through the music, dance, food and many other things on offer this afternoon.

I am also delighted that the celebration is taking place in the courtyard at PMQ. The Former Police Married Quarters, PMQ is one of eight Conserving Central projects, half of which are now up and running. Just two weeks ago, I took part in the opening of the nearby Central Police Station Compound – now called Tai Kwun Centre for Heritage and Arts. I must say I am thrilled to see Hong Kong's past rise again – revitalised and, as this good afternoon attests to, radiating life, purpose and good will.

Ladies and gentlemen, I can say very much the same about Hong Kong and Sweden. Our two economies, our two peoples, are finding good reasons to come together. Less than two years ago, the Karolinska Institutet's Ming Wai Lau Centre for Reparative Medicine opened here, setting in motion what I am confident will be a long and mutually rewarding collaboration between us in science and technology, as well as the creative industries. Indeed, Prince Carl Philip visited Hong Kong just six months ago, here to inaugurate the Swedish Pavilion at Business of Design Week, as well as to launch the first edition of #SwedenTalks_HK, a creative exchange that we very much look forward to building on.

The Prince is definitely not the only person from Sweden to visit us. Thanks to our mutual visa-free arrangement and direct flight connection, arrivals from Sweden to Hong Kong grew by about 25 per cent cumulatively in the past three years. And I am sure our people-to-people bond will continue to grow, especially amongst young people, with our bilateral Working Holiday Scheme commencing operation in January this year.

Ladies and gentlemen, when it comes to ties between Hong Kong and Sweden, there is a great deal more to say. But I would stop here now, so that I will have more time to tour the booths here and to learn how to make a

Swedish flower crown from the Consul General.

I wish the people of Sweden a most happy and memorable national day, and everyone here an enjoyable afternoon, actually till 10pm tonight. Thank you very much.

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HAD's Emergency Co-ordination Centre stands down

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

As the Landslip Warning has been cancelled, the Home Affairs Department's Emergency Co-ordination Centre and the emergency hotline 2835 1473 have ceased to operate.

Interest rate of the second interest payment for Silver Bond Series due 2020

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA), as representative of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (HKSAR Government), announces today (June 8) the relevant per annum interest rate for the second interest payment of Silver Bond Series due 2020 (Issue Number 03GB2006R) (the Bonds) issued under the Retail Bond Issuance Programme of the Government Bond Programme.

According to the Issue Circular dated June 1, 2017 for the Bonds, the second interest payment of the Bonds is scheduled to be made on June 25, 2018, and the relevant interest rate is scheduled to be determined and announced on June 8, 2018 as the higher of the prevailing Floating Rate and Fixed Rate.

On June 8, 2018, the Floating Rate and Fixed Rate are as follows:

Floating Rate: +2.10%(Annex)

Fixed Rate: +2.00%

Based on the Floating Rate and Fixed Rate set out above, the relevant interest rate for the second interest payment is determined and announced as 2.10% per annum.

Nineteen immigration offenders arrested

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a territory-wide anti-illegal worker operation codenamed "Twilight" from June 4 to 7. A total of 14 illegal workers and five suspected employers were arrested.

During the operation, ImmD Task Force officers raided 23 target locations including beach, a commercial building, a factory, food stalls, a game centre, residential buildings and restaurants. A total of 14 illegal workers and five employers were arrested. The illegal workers comprised nine men and five women, aged 24 to 58. Among them, two men were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. Three men and five women were suspected of using and being in possession of forged Hong Kong identity cards. Meanwhile, three men and two women, aged 26 to 44, were suspected of employing the illegal workers.

"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 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.