

Correctional officers stop assault by persons in custody

Correctional officers yesterday (May 22) stopped five persons in custody assaulting another person in custody at Tai Lam Correctional Institution.

At 3.29pm, a 34-year-old male person in custody was suddenly attacked by five persons in custody during recreational activities. Officers at the scene immediately stopped the assailants and called for reinforcements.

The victim sustained minor injuries to his head, shoulders and back. After examination and treatment by the medical officer in the institution hospital, he was transferred to a public hospital for further treatment. He returned to the institution the same day after receiving treatment.

The case has been reported to the Police for investigation.

CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza A infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 23) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection.

The 13-year-old boy, with good past health, has presented with fever, cough and sore throat since May 12. He attended the Accident and Emergency Department of Kwong Wah Hospital (KWH) on May 16. He was admitted and was subsequently transferred to the paediatric intensive care unit of KWH for further management on the same day.

His nasopharyngeal aspirate tested positive for influenza A (H3) virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with pneumonia and pleural effusion. He is now in a stable condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had no travel history in the incubation period. His home contacts are asymptomatic so far. Investigations are ongoing.

The public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses:

- Receive seasonal influenza vaccination for personal protection;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub as an effective alternative;
- Wash or clean hands frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, or after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs;
- Cover the nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly in a lidded rubbish bin;
- Put on a surgical mask when respiratory symptoms develop;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Avoid going to crowded or poorly ventilated public places; high-risk individuals may consider putting on surgical masks when staying in such places; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).

LCQ11: Ethnic minority women

Following is a question by the Dr Hon Chiang Lai-wan and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, in the Legislative Council today (May 23):

Question:

It is learnt that as some ethnic minority (EM) women do not understand Chinese nor English, they are unable to integrate into the Hong Kong community, not to mention securing employment. The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) pointed out in its submission to the Panel on Constitutional Affairs of this Council in February 2014 that "ethnic minority women are generally considered as one of the most vulnerable groups in Hong Kong due to their cultural and language background... (the) Government should take appropriate measures proactively to empower ethnic minority women to facilitate their integration into the local community". In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether the Government proactively took appropriate measures in the past three years to take forward the aforesaid recommendation of EOC so as to help the EM women integrate into the community; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether the Government offered in the past three years Chinese or English

language courses specifically designed for newly arrived EM women; if so, of the number of EM women who attended such courses; and

(3) whether the Government has offered domestic helper training courses conducted in EM languages for enrolment by EM women, in order to help them secure employment; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the Government) is alive to the difficulties faced by some ethnic minorities (EMs), including EM women, in integrating into the society due to language barrier and cultural differences. Therefore, various bureaux and departments, according to their policy purviews, provide relevant services and support for EMs to meet their needs so as to facilitate their early integration into the society. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) is responsible for the overall policy on the promotion of racial equality and the Race Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 602). It has issued the Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality to provide guidance to relevant bureaux and departments to ensure equal access to public services by EMs. For example, the Education Bureau implements a series of measures to help EM students learn Chinese. Overseen by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB), the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) and the Labour Department provide EMs with employment training and support. The Home Affairs Department (HAD) provides support services that help EMs integrate into the community.

After consulting the relevant bureaux and departments, the consolidated reply to the question raised is as follows:

(1) Starting from 2014-15, CMAB has been providing a recurrent funding of \$4.69 million to the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) for enhancing the EOC's publicity and education programmes on the Race Discrimination Ordinance. The EOC has since set up an Ethnic Minorities Unit (the Unit) to promote equal opportunities for EMs, including EM women, through advocacy, training and promotional efforts. Besides, the CMAB provided an additional provision of \$3 million to the Unit in 2017-18 for promoting equal opportunities for EMs. The funded programmes include media campaigns, production of educational publications, and conducting integrated research on EM education, academic and employment pathway with a view to drawing up practical guidebooks for EM youth. The Unit has all along been committed to helping EM women integrate into our community. To this end, a number of leadership groups, including one on Pakistani women and another on Sikh women, were formed last year within these communities with the objective of creating a team of ambassadors who can raise awareness and provide information on equal opportunities to community members as well as channel feedback to the EOC on their concerns.

In addition, the Women's Commission (WoC) was established in January 2001 as a high-level central mechanism on women's issues. Its mission is to enable women in Hong Kong, including EM women, to fully realise their due

status, rights and opportunities in all aspects of life. As at May 2018, amongst the 21 non-official members of WoC, one member is an EM woman. The WoC initiated the Capacity Building Mileage Programme (CBMP) in 2004 to encourage women of different backgrounds and educational levels to pursue lifelong learning and self-development. To encourage EM women to empower themselves through self-learning, the CBMP has offered some courses in English since March 2013. Besides, since 2012, LWB has been providing funding for WoC to implement the Funding Scheme for Women's Development for women's groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for organising projects and programmes which are conducive to women's development. WoC also distributes funding through the 18 District Councils to women's groups and NGOs in organising more district level activities which are conducive to women's development with a view to establishing a harmonious community together. Beneficiaries cover wide-range of women, including grassroot women, new arrival women, as well as EM women, etc.

HAD provides support services to EMs, including EM women, to help them integrate into the community. Major services include commissioning NGOs to operate six support service centres for EMs and two sub-centres to provide tailor-made classes, counselling, integration programmes and other support services. Some of these activities, such as mutual support groups for women, interest classes, health talks, etc, are specifically designed for EM women. With regard to the dissemination of information, HAD publishes guidebooks in English and six EM languages and maintains a dedicated website (www.had.gov.hk/rru) to introduce public services to EMs; sponsors five radio programmes in EM languages to provide EMs with local news and important government announcements; and commissions an NGO to distribute information kits to newly arrived EMs at the airport and answer their enquiries.

(2) The ERB has been offering dedicated Chinese or English language courses for EMs, including workplace Cantonese, workplace Putonghua, workplace Chinese (reading and writing), English training, etc. Eligible charitable organisations may also apply for subvention under the Adult Education Subvention Scheme (AESS) to conduct language and re-orientation courses designed for EMs. The numbers of the language courses concerned and enrolled EM trainees, including women trainees, in the past three years (i.e. 2015-16 to 2017-18) are shown in Appendix I.

In addition, HAD also organises language courses to help EMs meet the social needs in their daily lives. In the past three project years, a list of relevant courses organised and the number of EM women participating in such courses are shown in Appendix II.

(3) Currently, ERB has not offered domestic helper training courses conducted in EM languages. If an EM would like to take any retraining course conducted in Cantonese, ERB could arrange teaching assistants who can speak English or EM languages to support in class, or offer subsidy to the training body concerned for development of supporting materials and teaching assistance. Through its Focus Group on Training for Ethnic Minorities, ERB will understand the training and employment needs of EMs and hence provide suitable retraining courses.

LCQ9: Large number of Mainland tourists staying overnight in local camp sites and beaches

Following is a question by the Hon Yiu Si-wing and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, in the Legislative Council today (May 23):

Question:

It has been reported that during the Labour Day holiday of the Mainland (commonly known as "Labour Day Golden Week") this year, a large number of Mainland residents came to Hong Kong under the arrangement of a number of Mainland travel agencies, and set up tents and stayed overnight at designated camp sites and locations where the erection of tents was not permitted (e.g. beaches). Such a situation not only caused nuisance to the residents in the vicinity of the camp sites, but also affected environmental hygiene and natural ecology. In reply to an enquiry raised by me on related issues last year, the Government indicated that it would step up law enforcement actions and communicate with the relevant Mainland authorities. However, the problem is still worsening. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the measures and follow-up actions taken by the authorities so far since the occurrence of the aforesaid situation last year;
- (2) whether it has conducted investigations into cases in which organisations not holding a travel agent's licence were suspected to be running the aforesaid business; if so, of the details of the law enforcement actions taken in the past 12 months by the authorities, and the respective numbers of prosecutions and convictions concerned; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether it reviewed, in the past three years, the booking arrangement adopted for the various designated camp sites and the supply and demand of camping areas; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; whether it will consider capping the number of persons on the camp sites so as to provide campers with a better camping experience and avoid causing excessive nuisance to the surrounding environment; and
- (4) given that more and more local residents and Mainland tourists are interested in going to Hong Kong's countryside for recreational purpose, whether the authorities will make available more designated camp sites and install additional facilities at existing camp sites to meet the demand; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government attaches great importance to the sustainable and healthy development of the tourism industry. While ensuring the industry's stable and orderly growth, we also seek to minimise as far as possible the impact of tourist activities on the local community. With the relevant bureaux and departments consulted, our reply to the question raised by the Hon Yiu is as follows:

(1) In May 2017, after noticing a number of Mainland tourists had camped at Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach, Mui Wo Silver Mine Bay Beach and Pui O Campsite on Lantau Island, the Tourism Commission (TC) immediately wrote to the then China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) (the present Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT)) reporting to them the situation and urging them to, through appropriate channels in the Mainland, remind the travel trade and travellers to pay attention to and comply with relevant rules and regulations in Hong Kong. The then CNTA replied in June 2017, vowing to step up training for tourist guides and pre-departure education, so as to make sure the travel trade and travellers were well aware of the relevant information. TC also collaborated with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) in stepping up inspections at various popular campsites and reminding travellers to abide by relevant rules and regulations.

Prior to the 2018 Labour day Holiday, after noticing the flock of Mainland tourists into Ham Tin Wan and Sai Wan in Sai Kung, TC immediately notified AFCD, which sent officers to inspect the sites, as well as came up with contingent staffing arrangements to ensure sufficient manpower was deployed to patrol the area throughout the Holiday, to advise and educate individuals involved in inappropriate behaviours, and to step up site cleansing.

TC convened an inter-departmental meeting in early-May to explore ways to more effectively cope with similar incidents. The meeting agreed TC would step up liaison with various Mainland tourism authorities (including the MoCT, the Guangdong Province Tourism Administration, the Guangzhou Tourism Authority and the Shenzhen Municipal Bureau of Culture, Sports and Tourism, etc.) with a view to keeping in view the travel trends of Mainland tourists, and identifying and reporting destinations that they would likely visit to Home Affairs Department and other relevant departments in various districts for advance planning. AFCD, LCSD and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department would too from time to time review their site management and staffing mechanism, including deploying staff to step up management of tourist flows at popular destinations during peak arrival seasons of Mainland tourists, such as the Chinese New Year Golden Week and National Day Golden Week, as necessary, so as to minimise the impact of tourist activities on the local community.

(2) We understand the Mainland camping groups visiting Hong Kong during the past two Labour day Holidays were organised by Mainland corporations or

tourists themselves, and no Hong Kong receiving agents were involved. TC has written to the MoCT and other relevant Mainland departments expressing concerns on the issue and urging them to look into the case and follow up on any corporations or individuals proven in violation of relevant Mainland rules and regulations. In the meantime, the Travel Agents Registry would continue to maintain close communication with the travel trade and refer any information on suspected unlicensed travel agent business cases to the Police for criminal investigation.

(3) and (4) There are currently 44 designated campsites in Hong Kong, of which 41 are within country parks, under AFCD's jurisdiction and open to the public (including travellers, similarly hereinafter) on a first-come, first-served basis. Out of the remaining three, which are under LCSD's jurisdiction, Chong Hing Water Sports Centre, as a recreational spot integrating facilities for day camping, overnight camping and water activities, requires reservation. Pui O Campsite on Lantau Island offers designated camp bays indicated by markings and an open lawn camping area, of which the former are open for priority reservation by Hong Kong residents during Labour day, National Day and Chinese New Year Holidays and, open to public use with on-site registration on a first-come, first-served basis as the latter is, during other times of the year. As regards the Tuen Mun Butterfly Beach Park Campsite, it also offers designated camp bays that are open for public use with on-site registration on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Government conducts review on the use of campsites from time to time, and improves their facilities and explores increasing camping locations based on the needs of countryside visitors and the conditions of individual locations. Inasmuch as LCSD is concerned, the registration rates of campsites under its jurisdiction reached around 80 per cent on average in the past three years, and the department has carried out regular maintenance work on the facilities concerned depending on the situation.

As for AFCD, to meet public demands for camping activities in country parks, the department recently improved the facilities and services of various campsites based on their usage and popularity, including designating two new campsites in Sai Wan and Tai Mong Tsai in Sai Kung in 2014 and 2015 respectively, as well as conducting improvement work on the camping ground of Wan Tsai campsite in Sai Kung in 2016 and extension work on the camping area of Chung Pui campsite in Tai Po in 2017. Furthermore, the department has commissioned a consultancy study to explore the enhancement of recreation and education potential of country parks with an aim to meeting public needs. In respect of overnight facilities in country parks, the consultancy will explore the feasibility of introducing a reservation system for designated campsites in country parks. AFCD expects public consultation to be conducted under the study within 2018.

LCQ19: Support for single-parent families

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Hak-kan and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, in the Legislative Council today (May 23):

Question:

Some psychologists have pointed out that children from single-parent families may easily develop complex emotions and hence are prone to exhibit extreme behaviours. On the other hand, since the Government's cessation in 2004 of subvention for the five single parent centres (SPCs) operated by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the services needed by single-parent families have been provided by the Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs) under the Social Welfare Department (SWD). However, some concern groups on single-parent families have relayed to me that the services provided by IFSCs lack focus and may not meet the needs of single-parent families. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has compiled statistics on the number of single-parent families throughout the territory and the total number of children they had, in each of the past three years; if so, of the figures; among the requests for assistance handled by IFSCs in the past three years, of the number and percentage of those involving single-parent families;
- (2) of the support needed by the single-parent families seeking assistance from IFSCs, and the services IFSCs provide to them;
- (3) of the support provided by IFSCs to children from single-parent families who have emotional problems;
- (4) whether it reviewed in the past three years the adequacy of the support services currently provided to single-parent families and the appropriateness of the relevant arrangements; if so, of the outcome;
- (5) given that SWD plans to set up, within this financial year, a specialised co-parenting support centre to be operated by NGOs in each cluster, namely Hong Kong Island, Kowloon East, Kowloon West, New Territories East and New Territories West, which will be dedicated to providing services for divorced parents and their children, of the timetable for setting up such centres and the details of the services to be provided by them; and
- (6) whether it will consider resuming the subvention to NGOs for opening SPCs; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

My consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

(1) According to the results of the 2011 Population Census and the 2016 Population By-census, the number of single parents and the number of children aged under 18 of single parents in Hong Kong are as follows:

	2011 (Note 1)	2016 (Note 1)
Number of single parents	81 705	73 428
Number of children aged under 18 of single parents	103 937	93 943

Note 1: Information from "Hong Kong 2016 Population By-census Thematic Report: Single Parents" by Census and Statistics Department, with the number of single parents and number of children aged under 18 of single parents tabulated in Table 8.1 and Table 8.2 of the Thematic Report.

The number of cases involving single-parent families handled by the Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs) of the Social Welfare Department (SWD), and the percentage of such cases in the total number of cases in the past three years are tabulated below:

Year (Note 2)	Cases involving single-parent families	Percentage of such cases in the total number of cases
2015-16	4 312	17.59 per cent
2016-17	4 134	17.15 per cent
2017-18	4 260	17.07 per cent

Note 2: The figures for 2015-16 and 2016-17 were the numbers of cases as at March 31, 2016 and March 31, 2017, whereas the figure for 2017-18 was the number of cases as at December 31, 2017.

(2) and (3) The support required by single-parent families includes enhancing parenting skills, strengthening parent-child relationship, handling children's emotional problems as well as providing mental health education for parents and their children.

The IFSCs are concerned about the service needs of single-parent families and, through early identification and intervention, provide timely support to enhance their positive functioning. The support services provided by the IFSCs for single-parent families are as follows:

Integrated family services

The IFSCs provide a spectrum of preventive, supportive and remedial welfare services for individuals and families in need (including single-

parent families and single-parent children with emotional problems). These services include family life education, parent-child activities, enquiry services, volunteer training, outreaching service, groups and programmes, intensive counselling, financial assistance and referral services. To address the needs of single-parent families, the IFSCs organise groups and programmes specially designed for them (such as mutual help groups and talks), and provide them with appropriate services (including training on how to achieve effective parenting, handle children's emotional problems, and face life challenges positively).

Besides, if the children concerned suffer from emotional problems, the IFSCs' social workers will provide appropriate support based on their condition, including intensive counselling on emotion. If the children are assessed by social workers as having the need to receive clinical psychological service, social workers will make referrals so as to enable the children in need to receive appropriate psychological counselling service.

Family support programme

The SWD, through the IFSCs and related service units, provides more in-depth support and outreaching service by proactively contacting and serving the hard-to-reach individuals or families in need, such as those prone to the problems of domestic violence, mental illness and social isolation but unwilling to seek assistance (including single-parent families).

(4) and (6) In the past three years, the SWD did not conduct any review on the support services for single-parent families. Nevertheless, the SWD commissioned the University of Hong Kong at an earlier time to conduct a consultancy study on the review of family services. The scope of the review included the support services for single-parent families. During the review, the consultant team met the service users of Single Parent Centres (SPCs) to collect their views.

As pointed out in the review report, small-scale and independently run centres (including the five SPCs that the SWD ceased to provide subvention in 2004) might not be cost-effective in service delivery since their services and use of resources were somewhat fragmented and overlapping. Furthermore, the locations of these SPCs might not be easily accessible to the majority of service users. All in all, the consultant team recommended an integrated mode for delivering family services under the guiding principles of "accessibility", "early identification", "integration" and "partnership". The IFSCs operated by the SWD or subvented non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which adopt a community-based concept in the provision of traditional family services, and extend their service hours through pooling of resources, could provide more effective and convenient support services for families in need (including single-parent families) as compared to those independently run SPCs.

Therefore, the SWD has no plans to reopen the SPCs. However, the SWD will continue to provide integrated services through the IFSC service mode for single parents/single-parent families, including, apart from the provision of SPCs' services, the provision of those services that are not

available in the SPCs (such as intensive counselling and the arrangement of clinical psychological counselling).

(5) The SWD plans to set up five co-parenting support centres to be operated by NGOs in the fourth quarter of 2018 at the earliest to render services to separated/divorced parents and their children, including co-parenting counselling, parenting co-ordination service, structured parenting groups or programmes, child-focused counselling/groups or programmes, as well as children contact service. The services concerned are currently in the planning stage, with details to be finalised.