

Beaches of LCSD still closed (2)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (July 25) that in view of the latest situation of COVID-19, all gazetted beaches of the LCSD have been closed. Showering facilities, changing rooms and toilets at beaches are also closed. Entering a closed beach is illegal.

Members of the public should stay at home as much as possible during the epidemic. Do not go swimming or sunbathing at closed beaches to prevent crowds from gathering and reduce the chances of spreading the virus in the community.

Latest arrangements on Hongkong Post services

In view of the Government's announcement on the extension of the special work arrangement for government employees, Hongkong Post today (July 25) announced the arrangements on Hongkong Post services from July 27 to August 2.

To strike a balance between the public demand for counter services of post offices and the need to reduce the epidemic from further spreading in the community as far as possible, Hongkong Post will reopen post offices next week. However, post offices situated in Wong Tai Sin District where the epidemic remains relatively severe will be suspended from service. It includes Choi Hung Chuen Post Office, Chuk Yuen Post Office, Fu Shan Post Office, Lok Fu Post Office, Ngau Chi Wan Post Office, Tsz Wan Shan Post Office and Wong Tai Sin Post Office. All other post offices will maintain their normal opening hours on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, but their closing hours will be advanced to 4pm. Mobile post offices will be suspended from service.

In addition, Hongkong Post will provide mail delivery services (including that for Speedpost items) and mail collection from posting boxes on alternate days. However, door delivery services will be suspended for Wong Tai Sin District (including Wong Tai Sin, Lok Fu, Tin Ma, Tsz Wan Shan, Choi Hung, Choi Wan, Diamond Hill, San Po Kong, Ngau Chi Wan, Chuk Yuen and Hammer Hill), as well as those residential buildings with confirmed cases within the past 14 days. For mail addressed to these areas where door delivery is

required, we will issue mail collection card to the recipients notifying them of the collection arrangements.

All along, Hongkong Post has adopted various measures on social distancing and infection control at all post offices. To tie in with the arrangement of reopening post offices next week, we will step up these measures. Apart from body temperature checks for access to post offices and requirement of the wear of masks, anyone entering post office areas will also be required to apply hand sanitizer. We will also implement crowd control arrangements and introduce chips allotment measure, when necessary, to relieve the crowding of customers, so as to reduce social contacts and prevent any crowd from gathering.

Due to the adjustment of business hours of post offices, members of the public requiring counter services may expect longer waiting times. As a result of the above special arrangements, services of local and inbound mail will be subject to delay. We apologise for the inconvenience caused.

Hongkong Post will keep abreast of the latest situation and make timely adjustment to the arrangements for counter and delivery services. For further enquiry, please call the Hongkong Post enquiry hotline at 2921 2222.

“Change and Continuity” webinar co-hosted by Toronto ET0 and HKCBA (with photos)

â€‹The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto) and the Hong Kong-Canada Business Association (HKCBA) in Canada co-hosted a webinar on July 24 (Toronto time) on the latest financial developments and the new National Security Law in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The webinar entitled "Change and Continuity" is presented by the Secretary for Financial Services and Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, and moderated by the National Chair of the HKCBA, Mr Arthur Chan.

Noting 2020 has been a year of change for the world and Hong Kong is no exception, the state and outlook of Asia's top financial centre is full of challenges. At the webinar, Mr Hui, spoke on the latest financial situation in Hong Kong. "With the social unrest and emergence of COVID-19, Hong Kong has gone through a difficult year. That said, our financial markets remain vibrant and orderly. The Hong Kong dollar exchange rate is stable and has stayed near the strong side convertibility undertaking. There has not been any noticeable sign of fund outflow from the banking system but rather, we have seen an inflow of over US\$11 billion since June. Bank deposits have continued to go up over the past months and we have also seen a continuous

flow of IPO activities with stock trading showing remarkable increases," Mr Hui said.

Though COVID-19 has imposed pressure on economies and financial markets worldwide, Hong Kong's fundamental strengths remain intact. "A powerful combination of factors, including its prime location, rule of law, high-speed communications, free flow of information and capital, low and simple tax system, continue to make Hong Kong a leading international financial centre," Mr Hui continued.

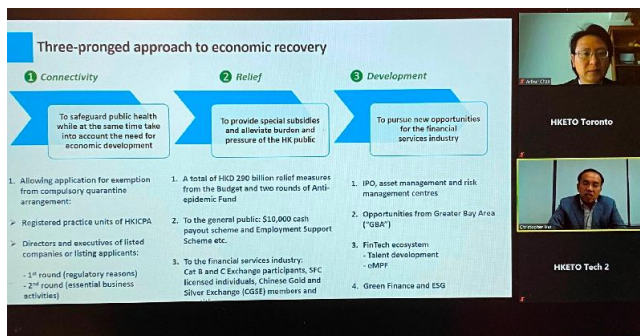
Mr Hui pointed out that the HKSAR Government has earmarked HK\$6 billion under the Anti-epidemic Fund to create around 30 000 time-limited jobs in both public and private sectors in the coming two years for people of different skill sets and academic qualifications. To support fintech development, the Government has launched the FAST Scheme, offering salary subsidy for fintech companies and start-ups, and other enterprises with fintech-related businesses to create 1 000 new jobs to employ local people and enrich Hong Kong's fintech talent pool.

Looking forward, Mr Hui is optimistic on the financial stability and economy of Hong Kong.

Besides, Mr Hui addressed concern on the new National Security Law's implications on the city's long-term financial stability. "The implementation of the National Security Law will not have any impact on the normal functioning of the financial markets, nor the normal conduct of businesses. The way in which market participants handle their proprietary data, access or transmit information, conduct commercial analysis or express opinion will not be affected. The law will help restore social stability and with this backdrop, I have every confidence that the financial sector in Hong Kong will continue to develop and thrive," he said.

Before closing, Mr Hui encouraged Canadian enterprises to tap on Hong Kong's strengths and status as a global financial centre, an asset and wealth management centre and an offshore Renminbi business hub, as they expand and invest in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and beyond.

The webinar, moderated by the HKCBA National Chair, Mr Arthur Chan, received overwhelming response and support from HKCBA members in Canada. Mr Hui addressed various questions from members after his presentation at the webinar.



Transport Department launches new online appointment booking service

The Transport Department (TD) said today (July 25) that to facilitate the submission of the applications for retention, transfer or assignment of vehicle registration mark, the TD has extended the service of the Appointment Booking System for members of the public to make an online appointment from today for submission of the applications over counters in Hong Kong Licensing Office and Kowloon Licensing Office starting from July 27 onwards. The opening period for online appointments will be 10 weeks.

Within the scheduled time slot, an applicant may submit three applications in connection with a specific vehicle at most, including at least one application for retention, transfer or assignment of vehicle registration mark, and two other applications involving the same vehicle with the appointment. Please note that other licensing applications not related to the vehicle with the appointment will not be accepted at the same time.

The TD appeals to members of the public in need to use the online appointment services as far as possible. During the suspension of walk-in counter services at the Licensing Offices due to the epidemic, those without an appointment may continue to submit applications for retention, transfer or assignment of vehicle registration mark via the drop-in boxes placed at the Hong Kong Licensing Offices and the Kowloon Licensing Office from 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday. Those submitting an application via a drop-in box should put the completed application form, all necessary documents and the appropriate fee (by crossed cheque payable to either "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR") into an envelope. Original identity documents and cash must not be submitted via a drop-in box. To avoid unnecessary delays, applicants should submit applications two to three weeks before the expiry date of the licences as far as practicable.

For enquiries, members of the public can contact Hong Kong Licensing

“Anti-epidemic Support Scheme for Property Management Sector” under “Anti-epidemic Fund” continues to disburse subsidies

The application period for the "Anti-epidemic Support Scheme for Property Management Sector" (ASPM) under the "Anti-epidemic Fund" ended on July 15. The Property Management Services Authority (PMSA) continues to step up its efforts in processing the applications received, so as to disburse subsidies to eligible owners' organisations and property management companies to benefit front-line property management workers promptly.

The PMSA received a total of around 13 000 applications under the ASPM during the application period. As of today (July 25), the PMSA has approved over 10 600 applications, involving subsidies of over \$440 million and benefitting over 38 000 building blocks and around 95 900 front-line property management workers. Please refer to the website of the PMSA (aspm.pmsahk.org.hk) for the names of the properties for which applications have been approved.

The Government has launched the ASPM under the "Anti-epidemic Fund" to subsidise owners' organisations or property management companies of eligible residential, composite (i.e. commercial cum residential), industrial and commercial buildings (including shopping malls) to provide the "Anti-epidemic Hardship Allowance" to the front-line property management workers. The ASPM will also provide the "Anti-epidemic Cleansing Subsidy" to owners' organisations or property management companies. For enquires on the ASPM, please contact the PMSA at 3696 1156 or 3696 1166, or visit the website of the PMSA.