

## Grants approved for cyclone victims in Bangladesh

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has accepted the advice of the Disaster Relief Fund Advisory Committee and approved from the Disaster Relief Fund three grants totalling \$927.4 million to three agencies for providing relief to cyclone victims in Bangladesh.

Announcing the grants today (July 20), a spokesman for the Government said that the cyclone had affected more than 10 million people in Bangladesh. The three grants – one of \$1.955 million to Adventist Development and Relief Agency China (Hong Kong), one of \$1.902 million to Plan International Hong Kong and one of \$5.417 million to Oxfam Hong Kong – will be used to provide hygiene kits and food kits as well as household items and shelter materials to benefit around 92 000 victims. As the targeted localities of the three relief agencies are different, there will be no overlapping of resources. The Committee hoped the grants would facilitate the provision of timely relief to the victims and help them restore their normal living.

"To ensure that the money is used for the designated purposes, the relief agencies will be asked to submit evaluation reports and audited accounts on the use of the grants after the relief projects have been completed," the spokesman said.

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## **Service arrangements of Public Records Office of Government Records Service**

In line with the special work arrangement announced by the Government on July 19, the Government Records Service (GRS) announced that during the period between today (July 20) and July 26, the Search Room of the Public Records Office (PRO) will only open on Monday for users who have made a reservation for holdings through the online catalogue. The quota is seven users which will be allocated on a first-come-first-serve basis. Public services to be provided will be limited to:

1. Loan and circulation service for reserved holdings; and
2. Self-service reproduction of holdings.

The above services will be suspended for those who have not made an online reservation for holdings.

Exhibition Hall in the Hong Kong Public Records Building will also be closed. Visits and public education programmes will continue to be suspended until further notice.

The above measures will be implemented until July 26 when they will be reviewed. Members of the public may visit the GRS website ([www.grs.gov.hk](http://www.grs.gov.hk)) and PRO Facebook ([www.facebook.com/grs.publicrecordsoffice](https://www.facebook.com/grs.publicrecordsoffice)) for updates. For enquiries, please email [proinfo@grs.gov.hk](mailto:proinfo@grs.gov.hk).

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## **Employers and employees should take precautions against heat stroke**

As the Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and employees to take appropriate precautions to prevent heat stroke when working in a hot or humid environment.

Heat stroke could occur if an employee works in a hot or humid

environment for prolonged periods of time, as the body may fail to regulate its temperature by effective heat dissipation through sweating.

The symptoms of heat-related illnesses include feeling thirsty, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, headache, dizziness, muscle spasm or even mental confusion, and loss of consciousness or convulsion in severe cases.

Construction workers, cleaning workers, kitchen workers and porters, for example, are more prone to heat stroke as they may be working for long hours in such an environment, especially if appropriate preventive measures have not been taken.

The LD reminds employers to arrange for a suitable assessment of the risk of heat stress in the work environment and take appropriate preventive measures. The LD has produced two leaflets entitled "Checklist for Heat Stress Assessment at Construction Sites" and "Checklist for Heat Stress Assessment at Outdoor Cleansing Workplaces" respectively. Employers engaged in construction or outdoor cleaning work are advised to refer to these checklists in assessing the risk of heat stress at their workplaces. As for heat stress assessment at a workplace in general, employers can refer to a booklet entitled "Risk Assessment for the Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work" produced by the LD.

The LD also reminds employers and employees to take the following precautions to prevent heat stroke:

#### Employers

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- (1) Take heed of the weather report and adopt shift work arrangements for employees to reduce their exposure to the hot environment, or arrange appropriate rest breaks for them during very hot periods;
- (2) Avoid working under direct sunlight and set up temporary sunshade wherever possible;
- (3) Provide cool potable water for employees at all times during work. If necessary, provide drinks containing electrolytes for employees to replenish loss of salt during profuse sweating;
- (4) Minimise physical demands by using tools or mechanical aids at work;
- (5) Increase air flow by enhancing ventilation or air-conditioning as appropriate;
- (6) Isolate heat-generating facilities at the workplace and use insulating materials to minimise heat dissipation to the other work areas; and
- (7) Provide relevant information and training for employees on heat stroke such as preventive measures and first aid treatment.

#### Employees

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- (1) Wear clothing made of suitable materials (for example, cotton) that is loose-fitting and light-coloured to help heat dissipation, minimise heat absorption and allow sweat evaporation;
- (2) Wear a wide-brimmed hat when working outdoors;
- (3) Drink plenty of water or other appropriate beverages with electrolytes to replenish the fluids and salt lost through sweating; and

(4) Whenever there are any symptoms of heat-related illnesses, rest in a cool or shady place and drink water, and inform supervisors to take appropriate actions immediately.

Some employees may have difficulty in adapting to a hot working environment owing to their own health conditions. Employers should take this into account and consider the recommendations of their doctors when assigning work to these employees.

In addition to the publications on risk assessment, the LD has produced a leaflet entitled "Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work in a Hot Environment" for the public. The publications can be obtained free of charge from the offices of the Occupational Health Service of the LD, or downloaded from the department's webpage at [www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2\\_9.htm](http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_9.htm).

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, occupational health talks on the prevention of heat stroke at work in a hot environment scheduled to be held in July have been cancelled.

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## 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.