

New District Officers for Islands and Wong Tai Sin assume office (with photos)

Miss Amy Yeung will assume the post of District Officer (Islands) tomorrow (July 18), succeeding Mr Anthony Li, and Mr Steve Wong will assume the post of District Officer (Wong Tai Sin) on the same day, succeeding Ms Annie Kong.

Brief biographical notes of the two officers are set out below:

Miss Amy Yeung

Miss Yeung joined the Administrative Service in 1998. She has served in various bureaux and departments including the former Education and Manpower Bureau; the Home Affairs Department; the former Constitutional Affairs Bureau; the former Health, Welfare and Food Bureau; the Home Affairs Bureau; the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau; the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office; and the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau.

She was Assistant Secretary for Security before taking up the new post.

Mr Steve Wong

Mr Wong joined the Administrative Service in 2009. He has served in various bureaux and departments including the Transport and Housing Bureau, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and the Home Affairs Department.

He was Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs before taking up the new post.



Hong Kong resident employer and illegal worker jailed

A Hong Kong resident employer and a Bangladeshi illegal worker were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (July 16).

During an anti-illegal worker operation conducted on October 22, 2019, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided a restaurant in Shek Kip Mei. Two illegal workers were arrested for working as odd-job workers. The Hong Kong resident employer of the two illegal workers was also arrested.

The illegal workers were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts earlier. The Hong Kong resident employer was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with two counts of being an employer of a person who was not lawfully employable as she did not take all practicable steps to ascertain whether the applicants were lawfully employable prior to employment. She pleaded guilty to the charges and was sentenced to seven weeks' imprisonment for each count. All sentences are to run concurrently, making a total of seven weeks' imprisonment.

In addition, during operation "Twilight" conducted on June 2, ImmD investigators raided a restaurant in Central. One male Bangladeshi illegal worker, aged 50, was arrested while working as a dish-washing worker. Upon identity checking, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was also arrested and investigation is ongoing.

The illegal worker was 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. He pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

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 on 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 threats 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 intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

Missing man in Kwun Tong located

A man who went missing in Kwun Tong has been located.

Wong Fai, aged 83, went missing after he was last seen in a shopping mall on Sceneway Road, Kwun Tong on July 15 morning. His family made a report to Police on the same day.

The man was located at a park on Tsui Ping Road this morning (July 17). He sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

Announcement by Judiciary

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary today (July 17) announced that floors and relevant places in the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts, which were closed after a visit by a court user tested positive for COVID-19, will reopen tomorrow (July 18) as cleansing and disinfection have been completed.

Re-appointment to Insurance Appeals Tribunal

The Chief Executive has re-appointed Mr Douglas Lam Tak-yip, SC, as the chairperson of the Insurance Appeals Tribunal (IAT) for a term of three years from July 26, 2020, to July 25, 2023.

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, said today (July 17), "The IAT provides an effective safeguard to ensure that the relevant regulatory decisions made by the Insurance Authority (IA) are reasonable and fair. Mr Lam has made valuable contributions to the effective operation of the IAT since his taking up the chairmanship of the IAT in July 2017. I look forward to his continued service to the IAT in the new term."

The IAT is a statutory tribunal established under the Insurance Ordinance (Cap. 41) to review specified decisions made by the IA. The IAT consists of the chairperson and two ordinary members appointed by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury from a pool of panel

members on the recommendation of the chairperson. Under the authority delegated by the Chief Executive, the Financial Secretary appointed 26 members to the panel of the IAT in July 2019.