

## **Flag-lowering ceremony cancelled**

Owing to the thunderstorm warning, the flag-lowering ceremony to be conducted at Golden Bauhinia Square, Wan Chai at 6pm today (July 3) will be cancelled.

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## **Company and director fined for default on Labour Tribunal award**

Ngai Ko Metal Work Limited and its director were prosecuted by the Labour Department (LD) for failing to pay an employee the awarded sum of the Labour Tribunal (LT) under the Employment Ordinance (EO). The company and the director pleaded guilty at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (July 3) and were each fined \$25,000 for a total of \$50,000. They were also ordered by the court to compensate the outstanding sum of about \$340,000 to the employee concerned.

The company failed to pay the employee the awarded sum of about \$340,000 within 14 days after the date set by the LT in accordance with the requirement of the EO. The director concerned was also convicted for his consent, connivance or neglect in the above offence.

"The judgment will disseminate a strong message to all employers and responsible officers of companies that they have to pay employees the awarded sums of the LT or Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board in accordance with the EO," a spokesman for the LD said.

"The LD will not tolerate these offences and will spare no effort in enforcing the law and safeguarding employees' statutory rights," the spokesman added.

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## **Cash Payout Scheme to advance payment disbursement to July 6**

The Government announced today (July 3) that as at 5pm yesterday (July 2), the Cash Payout Scheme had received 5.5 million registrations since its

launch on June 21. The public response was enthusiastic, with over 2 million people registering for the Scheme on the first day. Out of the 5.5 million registrations received, about 4.7 million (85 per cent) were submitted electronically through the 21 participating banks, among which close to 3 million (64 per cent) registrations and about 1.7 million (36 per cent) registrations were submitted through Internet banking and banks' websites respectively.

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, said, "I am glad that most members of the public have responded positively to the appeal of the Government and the banks to submit electronic registrations through Internet banking or banks' websites. Such registrations accounted for over 80 per cent of the total registrations received so far. Registration for the Scheme has gone smoothly in the past two weeks. The percentage of electronic registrations submitted through Internet banking is higher than expected, which helps streamline the verification procedures of the banks and speed up processing of the registrations received. As a result, about 4.3 million eligible registrants who made electronic registrations via banks from June 21 to 30 will start receiving payment via their selected personal bank accounts within two to three days from July 6, which is earlier than the original date of July 8.

"Registering electronically through banks is the most secure and convenient way to register and also the quickest way to receive payment. People submitting electronic registration from July 1 will receive payment about one week after registration."

On the other hand, registration by paper forms through banks or Hongkong Post is conducted in batches according to the registrants' year of birth. The first batch of registrants, i.e. those who were born in 1955 or before, started registering for the Scheme on June 21. The second batch (i.e. persons born in 1956 to 1970) may submit their registrations from July 5 onwards. Registrants submitting the forms from July 5 to 18 will receive payment or notification of cheque collection from around August 3 simultaneously. There is no need to rush for registration during the first days or submit the paper forms in person.

Members of the public are reminded to be cautious in handling their personal data to guard against scammers who may try to obtain personal data or money by deceit using the Cash Payout Scheme as an excuse. Neither the Government nor banks will call members of the public to get information for the purpose of registering for the Scheme. Moreover, the Government and banks will not ask members of the public to provide personal data by email or SMS, or via any embedded hyperlinks. People should not provide their personal information if they receive such requests.

The public may visit the website of the Scheme ([www.cashpayout.gov.hk](http://www.cashpayout.gov.hk)) or call 18 2020 for detailed information on the Scheme.

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# Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (July 3) released the latest grading of water quality for 38 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and one non-gazetted beach (i.e. Discovery Bay, see Note 2).

Nineteen beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), eight as Fair (Grade 2) and 12 as Poor (Grade 3).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach*	Middle Bay Beach
Chung Hom Kok Beach	Repulse Bay Beach*
Clear Water Bay First Beach**	Shek O Beach*
Clear Water Bay Second Beach*	South Bay Beach**
Deep Water Bay Beach*	St Stephen's Beach
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	Stanley Main Beach*
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*	Trio Beach*
Kiu Tsui Beach	Turtle Cove Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	Upper Cheung Sha Beach
Lo So Shing Beach	

Grade 2 beaches are:

Big Wave Bay Beach*	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*
Castle Peak Beach*	Pui O Beach*
Discovery Bay	Silverstrand Beach*
Lower Cheung Sha Beach**	Tong Fuk Beach

Grade 3 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach	Golden Beach*
Approach Beach**	Hoi Mei Wan Beach
Butterfly Beach*	Kadoorie Beach
Cafeteria New Beach*	Lido Beach*
Cafeteria Old Beach	Silver Mine Bay Beach*
Casam Beach*	Ting Kau Beach*

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are

calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality ([www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach](http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach)) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.

Note 1: The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced on July 1 that four more gazetted beaches (marked with two asterisks above) would reopen today. The twenty-one gazetted beaches marked with an asterisk above are also reopened beaches. Meanwhile, all the other beaches will remain temporarily closed until further notice.

Note 2: Discovery Bay is a non-gazetted beach without lifeguard service.

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## **Government dismisses rumours**

Regarding the rumours on the Internet that "the Government would soon publish in the Gazette a requirement for civil servants to take an oath and renounce their BNO status", a government spokesman clarified today (July 3) that the rumours are unfounded.

The Government will report the progress of the study on the proposal on oath-taking by civil servants at the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service meeting next Friday (July 10).