

Police temporarily close off roads in Causeway Bay as crowds gathering and chanting in the area

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

At around 1pm today (July 1), a group of people were gathering and chanting along East Point Road in Causeway Bay. Police officers at scene issued repeated warnings to the crowd, clearly stating that the activity they were engaging in might constitute offences related to unauthorised assembly in accordance with the Public Order Ordinance. However, the crowd refused to leave the scene, which prompted Police to take law enforcement action. In order to maintain public order at scene, Police have temporarily closed off Paterson Street, East Point Road and Great George Street, prohibiting members of the public from entering.

Police request the crowd to stop gathering and leave immediately. Members of the public should refrain from taking part in such activities. Police will take resolute law enforcement action including making arrests.

Latest arrangements for LCSD public services

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (July 1) that, in view of the latest situation of COVID-19, more leisure facilities and venues will reopen from July 3 (Friday), and some restrictions on the reopened facilities will be relaxed. Meanwhile, the percentage of seating capacity in all LCSD's performance venues will be expanded starting from the same date, and all public libraries will resume normal opening hours from July 7 (Tuesday) onwards.

Among the leisure venues, amphitheatres, spectator stands of indoor and outdoor leisure facilities will reopen for individual leisure use/individual use from July 3. Two more swimming pools will reopen on the same day. They are Mui Wo Swimming Pool and North Kwai Chung Jockey Club Swimming Pool. Please refer to

www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/common/documents/reopen_annex1_703.pdf for the list of reopened swimming pools. For details of facilities being opened in

swimming pools, please refer to notices displayed at venues. Reopened swimming pools will operate from 6.30am to 10pm daily, for three sessions with two breaks.

Four more gazetted beaches will be reopened from July 3, namely South Bay Beach on Hong Kong Island and Approach Beach, Lower Cheung Sha Beach and Clear Water Bay First Beach in the New Territories. Please refer to www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/common/documents/reopen_annex2_703.pdf for a list of reopened beaches. Lifeguard services will be provided daily at the reopened beaches from 9am to 6pm. Extended lifeguard services, 8am to 7pm, are provided on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays during peak period from June to August. Apart from the previously reopened gazetted beaches and the beaches to be reopened as mentioned above, all other beaches will remain closed with lifeguard services suspended. The public should neither swim nor gather at the closed beaches for reasons of social distancing and safety.

The LCSD appeals to venue users to comply with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap 599G) on the prohibition of group gatherings of more than the number of people as stipulated by the law.

Shower cubicles or shower heads with partitions in reopened leisure facilities will fully open (no longer open alternately) from July 3. Shower heads without partitions will open but continue maintaining 1.5 metres apart. The LCSD will continue to step up cleansing work at reopened leisure facilities and arrange body temperature screening for all people entering indoor venues.

Processing and acceptance of booking applications for amphitheatres and non-fee charging leisure venues for non-designated use/sales activities are suspended until further notice.

Regarding cultural venues, the limit on the number of audiences/users in all LCSD's performance venues will be relaxed starting from July 3, with seating capacity to be increased from 50 to 80 percent of the original. Consecutive seats will be limited to 16. All bookings for speech day events can resume. Eating or drinking is not allowed in the facilities of all performance venues. For details please refer to the notifications of individual venues.

For public programmes to be held at museums and cultural venues, including the Cinema of the Hong Kong Film Archive, the limit on the number of audiences/users and other arrangements will be the same as the above-mentioned performance venues, with capacity increased to 80 percent. Children facilities remain closed.

All Hong Kong Public Libraries and their Students' Study Rooms will resume normal opening hours from July 7 onwards. To help ensure public safety, libraries will continue to implement precautionary measures, including arrangement of cleaning session during opening hours. Please visit www.hkpl.gov.hk/en/index.html for details.

Visitors to facilities of the performance venues, museums and public libraries will need to use hand sanitiser and will be subject to temperature checks before admission. Audiences will need to wear their own masks in the venues. Children under 12 will only be allowed to enter exhibition facilities, museums and libraries when accompanied by an adult. People with fever, respiratory symptoms or sudden loss of taste or smell should avoid going to the venues. Enhanced measures including cleaning and disinfection between sessions will be conducted.

The LCSD will continue to monitor the situation closely and review the arrangements in a timely manner.

Government launches FinTech Anti-epidemic Scheme for Talent Development

The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (FSTB) today (July 1) announced that the FinTech Anti-epidemic Scheme for Talent Development (FAST Scheme) under the second round of the Anti-epidemic Fund will be launched and open for application on July 2 to support the development of financial technology (fintech) in Hong Kong.

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, said, "The Government has earmarked \$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 FSTB will launch the FAST Scheme 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."

The Scheme will offer a quota of 1 000 openings for application on a first-come-first-served basis. Each fintech company can apply for one subsidy for a new full-time position. Successful applicants will receive \$10,000 per month as a salary subsidy for a maximum of 12 months. The total funding involved may amount to \$120 million.

The applicant (company) must be a Hong Kong registered company or a not-for-profit organisation. The company must have commenced business before January 1, 2020, and still be in operation at the time of application. It must also be conducting substantive fintech activities at a fixed physical office in Hong Kong.

The candidate must be a Hong Kong resident over 18 years old with a Hong Kong identity card and be a holder of accredited certificates, diplomas and degrees obtained in programmes of post-secondary and tertiary institutes in

disciplines including information technology, digital media, accounting or business management; or be a person with relevant work experience.

The FSTB has appointed Cyberport to administer the Scheme, which will be open for online application via the Scheme's dedicated website (fast.cyberport.hk) from July 2, 2020, to July 2, 2021. Details of the eligibility criteria, application procedures and supporting documents required are available at the website for preview.

Government launches Research Talent Hub to provide more flexibility in engaging research talents

The Innovation and Technology Commission today (July 1) announced that the Researcher Programme (RP) and the Postdoctoral Hub (PH) have been merged to become the Research Talent Hub. Eligible companies and organisations are welcome to apply for the scheme.

At present, the RP and the PH provide funding support for eligible companies and organisations to engage two researchers and two postdoctoral talents respectively to conduct research and development (R&D) work. The two programmes have been merged and collectively named as the Research Talent Hub, under which each eligible company or organisation can obtain funding support to engage up to four innovation and technology (I&T) talents with a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree to conduct R&D work, thereby providing more flexibility for employers in engaging research talents.

The Research Talent Hub under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) aims to encourage university graduates to pursue careers in the I&T field and nurture more I&T talents. The maximum engagement period for each research talent is three years in general. The maximum monthly allowances for research talents with a local bachelor's degree, a local master's degree or a doctoral degree are \$18,000, \$21,000 and \$32,000 respectively. All technology companies conducting R&D activities in Hong Kong, including incubatees and I&T tenants of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited, as well as organisations and companies undertaking R&D projects funded by the ITF, are eligible to apply.

In the past three years, the RP has approved over 2 300 researcher positions with total funding of about \$780 million. For the PH, over 1 030 postdoctoral talents have been supported with total funding of about \$603 million since its launch in August 2018.

Details of the Research Talent Hub are available on the ITF website

(www.itf.gov.hk/en/funding-programmes/nurturing-talent/research-talent-hub/index.html). For enquiries, please contact the ITF Secretariat (Tel: 3655 5678; email: enquiry@itf.gov.hk).

HAD opens temporary heat shelters

The Home Affairs Department has opened 19 temporary heat shelters today (July 1) as the Very Hot Weather Warning (VHWW) is in force.

The shelters will be closed at 10pm if the VHWW is cancelled before 4.30pm. Otherwise, the shelters will be open until 8am tomorrow.

For further information, please call the department's hotline on 2572 8427.

The 19 temporary heat shelters are located at:

Hong Kong Districts:

Central and Western –

Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall
3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex,
2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

Eastern –

Causeway Bay Community Centre
7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern –

Lei Tung Community Hall
Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

Wan Chai –

Wan Chai Activities Centre
LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon Districts:

Kowloon City –

Hung Hom Community Hall
1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices,
42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

Kwun Tong –

Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre
71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po –
Shek Kip Mei Community Hall
G/F, Block 42, Shek Kip Mei Estate, Sham Shui Po

Wong Tai Sin –
Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –
Henry G. Leong Yaumatei Community Centre
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories Districts:

Islands –
Tung Chung Community Hall
G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building,
39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –
Kwai Shing Community Hall
Podium, Block 6, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Chung

North –
North District Community Centre
4/F, 2 Lung Wan Street, Sheung Shui

Sai Kung –
Hang Hau Community Hall
G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex,
38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –
Lung Hang Estate Community Centre
Lung Hang Estate, Sha Tin

Tai Po –
Tai Po Community Centre
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall
G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –
Butterfly Bay Community Centre
Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –
Long Ping Community Hall
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

Yuen Long –
Tin Yiu Community Centre
Tin Yiu Estate, Tin Shui Wai