

Employment Support Scheme receives over 130 000 applications

The Employment Support Scheme (ESS) has received from May 25, the first day of the application period, up to 6pm today (May 26), a total of around 72 000 applications from employers and about 61 000 applications from self-employed persons. The dedicated online portal (www.ess.gov.hk) is functioning well.

Eligible employers and self-employed persons are advised to submit online applications for the first tranche of wage subsidies of the ESS through the ESS online portal until 11.59pm on June 14 (Sunday).

For enquiries, please send email to enquiry@employmentsupport.hk or call the ESS Hotline (1836 122), for which the operation hours during the application period have been extended to Monday to Sunday from 9am to 6pm.

Applicants who need assistance in completing their online applications may call the above Hotline to make appointments with the three ESS Help Desks at the following locations:

- North Point Help Desk at Room 1701, A T Tower, 180 Electric Road, North Point;
- Kwun Tong Help Desk at Room 2507, Prosperity Center, 25 Chong Yip Street, Kwun Tong; and
- Tsuen Wan Help Desk at Room 1206, Chinachem Tsuen Wan Plaza, 455 Castle Peak Road, Tsuen Wan.

A total of over 15 000 enquiries have been received via the Hotline and email, and about 600 persons have made visits to the three Help Desks today.

LegCo Panel on Security visits San Uk Ling Holding Centre (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Security visited San Uk Ling Holding Centre (SULHC) in Man Kam To today (May 26) to better understand its operation.

Members first received a briefing from representatives of the Police on SULHC and the procedures in handling detainees. Members then visited the

detention facilities in SULHC. They also took the opportunity to learn more about issues relating to the protection of the rights and privacy of detainees.

Members who participated in the visit were the Chairman of the Panel, Mr Chan Hak-kan; the Panel Deputy Chairman, Ms Yung Hoi-yan; Panel members Mr Yiu Si-wing, Mr Charles Mok, Mr Chan Chi-chuen, Mr Chung Kwok-pan, Mr Lam Cheuk-ting, Mr Shiu Ka-chun, Dr Cheng Chung-tai and Mr Jeremy Tam Man-ho; as well as non-Panel member Mr Wong Ting-kwong.



Three persons convicted for illegally operating private columbarium

Three persons were convicted of illegally operating a private columbarium, contravening the Private Columbaria Ordinance, by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today (May 26). They were each fined \$8,000, with a criminal record registered.

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today that the Private Columbaria Affairs Office (PCAO) of the FEHD had earlier detected that a columbarium in Malacca Street, Hung Hom, was suspected to have rented out niches without a licence under the Ordinance. An operation was thus mounted at the premises. The operators of the unlicensed columbarium were arrested and prosecuted.

Under the Ordinance, any person who operates, keeps, manages or in any other way has control of a columbarium other than under a licence commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for three years; or on conviction on indictment to a fine of \$5 million and imprisonment for seven years.

The spokesman said, "This department will continue to take stringent enforcement action against illegally operated private columbaria. Members of the public should not buy or rent niches from any unlicensed columbaria. If members of the public suspect any activities of illegally operating a columbarium, they should immediately report it to the PCAO by calling hotline 3142 2300."

CE expresses sorrow over passing of Dr Stanley Ho

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (May 26) expressed deep sorrow over the passing of Dr Stanley Ho.

"Dr Ho was a successful entrepreneur. The enterprise founded by him involves multiple business activities, and he played a pivotal role in Hong Kong and Macao. Dr Ho loved the country and started to invest in the Mainland as early as the 1970s to support its reform and opening-up, and participate in its development. He also served as a member of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, contributing further to the advancement of the country.

"Dr Ho was a member of the Hong Kong Basic Law Consultative Committee, witnessing the city's return to the Motherland. He took an active part in the development of Hong Kong's community service, lending staunch support for the fund-raising activities of the Community Chest and donating generously to various local charitable organisations as well as tertiary education institutions. He also donated to support the establishment of leisure and cultural facilities as well as anti-drug education and promotional programmes, making significant contributions to the community. He was awarded the Grand Bauhinia Medal in 2010.

"I am saddened by the passing of Dr Ho. On behalf of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to his family," Mrs Lam said.

EPD successfully combats illegal land filling works and waste disposal at ecologically important sites in New Territories (with photos)

A person-in-charge of works was convicted and fined a total of \$16,000 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (May 26) for contravening the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) and the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) as a result of carrying out land filling works and disposing of construction waste illegally at Lut Chau, Yuen Long. Moreover, during investigations from February to June last year, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) successfully detected four cases of illegal disposal of construction waste at the above-mentioned location. The persons-in-charge of works and dump truck drivers involved were convicted and fined a total of \$29,500 by the court for contravening the WDO earlier and today.

A spokesman for the EPD said that the department received a report from a member of the public in February last year about illegal land filling works being carried out to build the embankment of a fish pond on a plot of government land in Lut Chau, Yuen Long and its adjacent areas. The EPD then conducted numerous blitz inspections of the areas and successfully detected that construction waste was deposited next to fish ponds from several dump trucks, while land filling works were carried out at fish ponds by dredgers operated by workers.

After an investigation, the EPD confirmed that the area concerned is a Site of Special Scientific Interest as designated in the Mai Po and Fairview Park Outline Zoning Plan. The ecology of the area and the fish ponds therein are protected under the EIAO. In addition, the works were carried out without

an environmental permit. After collecting evidence, the EPD prosecuted the persons-in-charge of works and dump truck drivers involved under the EIAO and the WDO. Recently, EPD officers conducted follow-up inspections of Lut Chau as well as its adjacent areas and noticed that there were no land filling works arising from the illegal disposal of construction waste. The EPD believes that the series of actions taken by the department has produced a deterrent effect.

The spokesman stressed that the EPD has been striving to combat illegal land filling works at ecologically sensitive sites in the New Territories through various channels, including reports from members of the public, proactive blitz operations, aerial photographs and photographs taken by drones.

Anyone carrying out works at Sites of Special Scientific Interest is in contravention of the EIAO unless they obtain environmental permits from the EPD beforehand. Offenders may be liable to a maximum fine of \$2,000,000 and six months' imprisonment on a first conviction. A maximum fine of \$5,000,000 and two years' imprisonment may be imposed on a subsequent conviction. In addition, anyone disposing of waste in public places commits an offence. According to the WDO, offenders may be liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment on a first conviction. A maximum fine of \$500,000 and six months' imprisonment may be imposed on a subsequent conviction.

