

Application period for Fitness Centre Subsidy Scheme to end on June 3

The application period for the Fitness Centre Subsidy Scheme, launched under the second round of the Government's Anti-epidemic Fund, will end at 6pm on June 3 (Wednesday). Eligible fitness centres wishing to apply for the subsidy should submit their applications as soon as possible. Application forms and guidelines can be downloaded from the Home Affairs Bureau's (HAB) website (www.hab.gov.hk/en/aef_fitness_centre_subsidy_scheme).

The HAB has entrusted the Physical Fitness Association of Hong Kong, China to assist in the implementation of the Scheme. The Scheme has been open for applications from May 4. As of May 22, more than 1 300 applications were received. Vetting of applications has already commenced during the application period. The subsidy will be disbursed to the approved fitness centres by post in the form of a crossed cheque.

For enquiries concerning details and application procedure of the Scheme, applicants can contact the Physical Fitness Association of Hong Kong, China by phone at 2302 9089 or by email at subsidy@hkpfa.org.hk.

SFST visits Official Receiver's Office (with photos)

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, today (May 22) visited the Official Receiver's Office (ORO) to learn about its bankruptcy and winding-up services provided to the public.

Accompanied by the Official Receiver, Ms Phyllis McKenna, Mr Hui visited the Fast Track Cases Unit under the Case Management Division. He was briefed on the procedures for handling debtor-petition bankruptcy cases and the preparation for the Electronic Submission System (ESS).

Mr Hui pointed out that the number of insolvency cases is likely to increase in light of the economic downturn and the rising unemployment rate. The ORO will keep in view the number of new cases received and consider possible measures as appropriate to streamline work procedures while using information technology to enhance efficiency to cope with the increasing caseload.

The ESS is a one-stop portal to receive and time-stamp electronic

submissions of documents and forms from various stakeholders, which can improve the ORO's efficiency in handling bankruptcy and winding-up cases. The Government will submit a funding application to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in due course, Mr Hui said.

Mr Hui later inspected the public enquiry counters to better understand the services for filing bankruptcy and compulsory winding-up petitions, and conducting bankruptcy, individual voluntary arrangement and compulsory winding-up searches.

Before concluding his visit, Mr Hui met with staff of the ORO to learn about their work. He also expressed appreciation for their efforts in providing public services amid the pandemic.



ENB to offer more than 500 time-limited jobs under Green Employment Scheme

In view of the severe blow brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic to the economy of Hong Kong, the Environment Bureau (ENB) will launch the Green

Employment Scheme (GES) as an initiative to create jobs. The GES will provide more than 500 time-limited jobs in the realm of environmental protection in the coming months to offer employment opportunities and further promote green actions. The first batch of more than 100 jobs will open for recruitment through different channels next week.

A spokesman for the ENB said today (May 22), "The GES covers three categories of environmental protection work, namely 'Electric Vehicles (EVs) Popularisation', 'Use Less, Waste Less' and 'Leave No Trace at Mountain and Sea'. The positions, both full-time and part-time, will mostly last for about six months to a year. The scheme, with positions ranging from environmental project co-ordinators, environmental education officers and assistants, green ambassadors, eco-tour guides and environmental investigators to other workers, is suitable for candidates with different skills and qualifications."

To promote popularisation of EVs, the ENB has earmarked \$2 billion to launch a pilot scheme to subsidise the installation of EV charging-enabling infrastructure in car parks of existing private residential buildings. In this regard, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has created 30 Project Co-ordinator (electric vehicle) positions under the category of "EV Popularisation" to strengthen manpower in contacting and assisting property management companies, owners' corporations and owners' committees to participate in this pilot subsidy scheme.

Furthermore, under the category of "Use Less, Waste Less" of the GES, about 30 posts of Project Assistant (Waste Reduction and Recycling) will be created to assist in strengthening support for different waste reduction and recycling projects. The Community Green Stations (CGSs) under the EPD will also offer through their operators some 45 jobs, including Environmental Education Officers and Assistants, to enhance their operations.

The more than 100 jobs mentioned above will be open for recruitment next week via various channels, such as newspapers and Facebook pages of individual CGSs. The new recruits are expected to start reporting for duty from July to September.

Meanwhile, recruitment for the remaining 400 or so jobs under the GES will gradually commence in the coming months with details as follows:

The EPD and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will recruit 150 green ambassadors and 50 cleaning workers to promote the "Leave No Trace at Mountain and Sea" outing concept. Recruitment will be mainly conducted in two phases with the first commencing in June. A further 50 eco-tour guides and artisans will be employed under the scheme to assist in promoting the environmental and ecological protection of country parks and the remote countryside. Furthermore, to protect the shoreline environment, the EPD will call up around 100 green ambassadors to participate in beach cleaning and publicity work. Environmental investigators will also be recruited to assist in the preparation of the implementation of the voluntary scheme on phasing out products containing microbeads.

To further tie in with the work of "Use Less, Waste Less", the EPD will employ more than 50 waste reduction and recycling green ambassadors to strengthen the promotion of the "Plastic-free" School Lunch Pilot Scheme, using less disposable tableware, food and yard waste recycling and more.

"We will start recruiting next week through different channels based on the requirements of the respective positions, in the hope of offering time-limited employment opportunities for different sectors in the community at this difficult time while further promoting green work," the spokesman said.

Transcript of remarks by LegCo President on NPC's deliberation on draft decision on establishing legal system and enforcement mechanisms for HKSAR to safeguard national security

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

Following is the transcript of remarks by the President of the Legislative Council (LegCo), Mr Andrew Leung, on the deliberation of the National People's Congress (NPC) on the draft decision on establishing the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to safeguard national security at a media briefing at the LegCo Complex today (May 22):

The annual session of NPC commences today. One of the agenda items is to deliberate the resolution put forward by the NPC Standing Committee on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard national security.

National security is the bedrock underpinning the well-being of people of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Safeguarding stability of the whole country and Hong Kong as its Special Administrative Region will facilitate the economic development and improvement of people's livelihood. In light of the latest development and actual situation, the NPC exercises its powers enshrined in the Constitution of PRC to establish the relevant legal system. This is in line with the interest of the country and Hong Kong society as a whole. As the President of LegCo, I respect, understand and support this initiative.

The HKSAR is an inalienable part of the PRC. Hong Kong has the constitutional responsibility to enact laws in accordance with Article 23 of the Basic Law. The Government should commence the relevant work at an

appropriate time. The successful implementation of "One Country, Two Systems" can ensure the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. This is also the wish shared by Hong Kong people.

Intercountry Adoption (Contracting States) (Amendment) Order 2020 **gazetted**

The Intercountry Adoption (Contracting States) (Amendment) Order 2020 (Amendment Order) made by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare under section 20D of the Adoption Ordinance (Cap. 290) was published in the Gazette today (May 22).

The Amendment Order seeks to add eight Contracting States to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Convention) to the Schedule to the Intercountry Adoption (Contracting States) Order (Cap. 290 sub. leg. C) so that the Convention applies to an adoption between the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and any of these eight Contracting States in relation to an application made under the Convention. The eight Contracting States are the Republic of Benin, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, the Republic of Ghana, the Coöperative Republic of Guyana, the Republic of Honduras, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Namibia and the Republic of Zambia. In accordance with the Convention, the Convention has effect between the HKSAR and these eight Contracting States since the following dates:

The Republic of Benin	October 1, 2018
The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire	October 1, 2015
The Republic of Ghana	January 1, 2017
The Coöperative Republic of Guyana	June 1, 2019
The Republic of Honduras	July 1, 2019
The Kyrgyz Republic	November 1, 2016
The Republic of Namibia	January 1, 2016
The Republic of Zambia	October 1, 2015

The Convention sets out, inter alia, a framework for international coöperation in intercountry adoptions. The implementation of the Convention in the HKSAR is governed by the Adoption Ordinance. The Convention is currently in force in 102 states.