

Tenders invited for licence of advertising area

The Government Property Agency is inviting tenders for a three-year licence of the advertising area on a portion of the rooftop of Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

The advertising area should be used for the purpose of installation, operation, management, maintenance and control of the Advertising Display Systems (as defined in the Form of Licence Agreement) for display of advertisements only.

The tender notice was uploaded today (May 15) to the Agency's website: www.gpa.gov.hk. Tender documents are available for collection at the Government Property Agency, 9/F, South Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, during the period from 9am to 6pm from Mondays to Fridays, except public holidays. The documents can also be downloaded from the Agency's website.

Interested tenderers who wish to attend a site inspection should make a prior appointment with the Government Property Agency by calling 3842 6775 on or before June 3 this year.

Tenderers must submit their tenders by placing them in the Government Logistics Department Tender Box situated on the Ground Floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong, before noon on June 12 this year. Late tenders will not be accepted.

Stamp Duty Ordinance amended to lower transaction cost for primary market ETF activities

The Government published the Stamp Duty Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 8) Regulation 2020 (Regulation) in the Gazette today (May 15).

The Regulation seeks to amend Schedule 8 to the Stamp Duty Ordinance (Cap. 117) to waive the stamp duty on stock transfers involving the activities of exchange traded fund (ETF) market makers in the course of allotting and redeeming ETF units listed in Hong Kong.

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, said, "The rapid growth of ETF market has brought new opportunities to

the development of our securities market. By reducing the transaction cost of ETFs listed in Hong Kong, the new initiative will spur the development of our ETF market and drive the depth and liquidity of our securities market, thereby reinforcing Hong Kong's position as an international financial centre."

"I am pleased to see the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited's similar efforts in introducing further measures to lower the transaction cost of ETFs traded in Hong Kong. I am confident that with our concerted efforts, we will be able to attract more ETFs to list on our market and develop Hong Kong as an ETF hub of choice in the region."

In his 2020-21 Budget, the Financial Secretary announced the new initiative of waiving the stamp duty on stock transfers for primary market ETF activities. The stamp duty for trading ETF in the secondary market in Hong Kong has been waived since 2015.

Following the gazettal today, the Regulation will be tabled before the Legislative Council for negative vetting on May 20 and will come into effect on August 1, 2020.

EDB statement

Regarding a question of History Paper 1 of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination which has aroused grave public concerns today (May 14), a spokesman for the Education Bureau (EDB) gives the following response:

"The EDB noted that one-sided information has been attached to the question of History Paper 1 of this year's HKDSE Examination. The question is a leading one, which may lead candidates to reach a biased conclusion, seriously hurting the feelings and dignity of the Chinese people who suffered great pain during the Japanese invasion of China. The EDB deeply regrets and condemns the design of such a question in a public examination.

"The EDB demands the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority to seriously follow up the matter and provide reasonable explanations to the public. It is also required to review the question-setting mechanism comprehensively to make prompt improvements with a view to maintaining the fairness, impartiality and credibility of the HKDSE Examination."

Transcript of remarks by FS at media session (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at a media session after passage of the Appropriation Bill 2020 today (May 14):

Reporter: Secretary, do you have plans to roll out a third round of relief measures to help those who have been left out in this round of relief package? And when will people be able to get the \$10,000 subsidy – cash handout?

Financial Secretary: I think first and foremost, our task is to have the various measures in the Budget as well as in the two rounds of Anti-epidemic Fund, to be implemented as soon as possible. I believe when those measures are implemented, their effect will be better felt by the community. As to the timing for the distribution of the \$10,000 to qualified Hong Kong permanent residents, our plan is to start registration towards the end of June, start the payment in July, and we believe most of the eligible individuals will be able to get their payments by the end of August.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Chinese Medicine clinics present an option for fighting the epidemic and rehabilitation (with photos)

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, visited the Chinese Medicine Clinic cum Training and Research Centre (CMCTR) in Tai Po District today (May 14) to meet the representatives from the organisation operating the CMCTR and resident Chinese Medicine Practitioners (CMPs), and to learn more about daily operation of the Tai Po CMCTR, including the Special Chinese Medicine (CM) Out-patient Programme (the Programme) for discharged persons who have received COVID-19 treatment.

Accompanied by the Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority (HA), Dr Tony Ko, Professor Chan met the Chairperson of United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service (UCN) Management Committee, Mr John Li; the Executive Director of UCN, Ms Esther Mok; and the Chief of Service (CM) of UCN, Dr Cheung Kit-nung. They exchanged views on the development of CM and the operation of the CMCTR and visited the consultation room, acupuncture room and CM pharmacy of the CMCTR.

"The Government has all along been committed to promoting the development of CM. It has been incorporated into the healthcare system of Hong Kong. The HA invited CM experts from the Schools of CM of three local universities, namely the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Baptist University, as well as the Chiefs of Service of the CMCTRs to set up a CM expert group in early February, to give advice on involvement of CMPs in combating COVID-19. With the facilitation and support of the Food and Health Bureau, the Programme was subsequently launched. I would like to express my gratitude for the CMPs for offering an option for rehabilitation treatment through the Programme during the current epidemic. In addition, the introduction of Government-subsidised CM service in the 18 districts in March 2020 has also better addressed the need for primary health care at district level," Professor Chan said.

The Programme was launched at CMCTRs which operate on a tripartite collaboration model involving the HA, a non-governmental organisation and a local university on April 24. It provides free CM general consultation service to discharged persons who have received COVID-19 treatment in public hospitals in Hong Kong. The service not only provides an alternative rehabilitation treatment for COVID-19 discharged patients, but also fosters the integration of CM and Western medicine and the development of related CM clinical studies.

The CMCTRs joining this Programme would provide a maximum of 10 free CM general consultations within six months from the discharge date of the patients, with no more than five doses of CM prescribed per visit according to their clinical needs (acupuncture, bone-setting (Tui-na) and other treatments are not included in this Programme).

"The United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service – The Chinese University of Hong Kong Chinese Medicine Clinic cum Training and Research Centre (Tai Po District) is the first CMCTR to provide this service. I would like to thank UCN and all CMPs of the CMCTR for the successful launch of the Programme. We are pleased that starting from mid-May, there will be more CMCTRs in other districts joining the Programme for the benefit of more patients requiring rehabilitation treatment who may reside in different districts," Professor Chan said. Apart from the Tai Po CMCTR, the other six CMCTRs joining the Programme are located in the Southern District, Kowloon City District, Sha Tin District, North District, Yuen Long District and Sai Kung District. Since the launch of the Programme, the HA has issued nearly 400 invitation letters to related discharged patients.

For details of the Programme, please contact the CM Department of the HA (telephone: 2794 3068) or visit the HA CM KINetics (CMK) website: cmk.ha.org.hk/.

Moreover, to enhance the role of the CM sector in the anti-epidemic efforts, the Government has included the "Novel Coronavirus Epidemic Related Projects" in the CM Development Fund (the Fund) as a priority area open for application for the CM sector to undertake related training, research and promotion projects. The scope of the "CM Clinic Improvement Funding Scheme" in the Fund has also been expanded to subsidise more CM clinics so as to

enhance their response to infectious diseases by upgrading their infection control facilities. The Government will continue to maintain close liaison with the CM and CM drug industries and provide more effective support in order to give full play to the strengths of CM.

