

SHA visits Physical Fitness Association of Hong Kong, China (with photos)

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui, visited the Physical Fitness Association of Hong Kong, China (the Association) today (May 8). Accompanied by the Commissioner for Sports, Mr Yeung Tak-keung, Mr Tsui inspected the work of the Association in implementing the Fitness Centre Subsidy Scheme (the Scheme) launched under the second phase of the Anti-epidemic Fund.

"The Scheme aims to provide a one-off subsidy of \$100,000 to fitness centres to tide businesses over the financial difficulties arising from the precautionary measures taken in view of the epidemic. We thank the Association for handling the applications of the Scheme for the Government and believe that the eligible applicants will receive the subsidy very soon," said Mr Tsui.

Mr Tsui also expressed gratitude to the fitness industry for complying with the Government's preventive measures, including suspension of business, in the fight against virus. In view of the stabilising epidemic situation, the Government has conducted a health risk assessment and will allow premises, including fitness centres, to resume operations starting from today provided that corresponding preventive measures have been adopted. Mr Tsui hopes that the fitness industry will soon regain vitality.

The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) has commissioned the Association to assist in implementing the Scheme, which has been open for application from May 4. As at May 7, the Association has received 397 applications, of which more than half of the applications have been checked to be eligible initially, involving subsidies of around \$20 million. The other applications are still being processed. The application period for the Scheme will end on June 3. The application details of the Scheme are available on the website of the HAB (www.hab.gov.hk/en/aef_fitness_centre_subsidy_scheme). For enquiries concerning the Scheme and the application procedure, please call 2302 9089 or email to subsidy@hkpfa.org.hk.



Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (May 8), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 17 patients (14 male and three female, aged 10 to 89) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 109 patients under isolation currently. So far, 960 patients who had COVID-19 confirmed or probable infections have been discharged upon recovery.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (May 8) 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).

Twenty-seven beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1) and 12 as Fair (Grade

2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Big Wave Bay Beach	Pui O Beach
Cafeteria New Beach	Repulse Bay Beach
Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach	Shek O Beach
Chung Hom Kok Beach	Silver Mine Bay Beach
Clear Water Bay First Beach	Silverstrand Beach
Clear Water Bay Second Beach	South Bay Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach	St Stephen's Beach
Discovery Bay	Stanley Main Beach
Hap Mun Bay Beach	Ting Kau Beach
Hung Shing Yeh Beach	Tong Fuk Beach
Kiu Tsui Beach	Trio Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	Turtle Cove Beach
Lower Cheung Sha Beach	Upper Cheung Sha Beach
Middle Bay Beach	

Grade 2 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach	Golden Beach
Approach Beach	Hoi Mei Wan Beach
Butterfly Beach	Kadoorie Beach
Cafeteria Old Beach	Lido Beach
Casam Beach	Lo So Shing Beach
Castle Peak Beach	Ma Wan Tung Wan 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) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.

Note 1: To tie in with the response level under the Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance having been raised to the Emergency Response Level and to encourage people to avoid gathering, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department has announced that all beaches will continue to be temporarily closed until further notice.

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

Companies (Fees) (Amendment) Regulation 2020 gazetted

The Government published the Companies (Fees) (Amendment) Regulation 2020 (the Amendment Regulation) in the Gazette today (May 8).

The Amendment Regulation seeks to amend the Companies (Fees) Regulation (Cap. 622K) to waive the registration fees for annual returns (except for late delivery) charged by the Companies Registry (CR) for two years, and reduce the fees payable in relation to incorporation of companies (including registration of non-Hong Kong companies) through electronic means by 10 per cent.

"The Amendment Regulation will implement the relief measure of waiving registration fees for annual returns (except for late delivery) charged by the CR for two years as announced in the 2020-21 Budget by the Financial Secretary, and seek to encourage the wider use of the CR's electronic services," a spokesman for the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau said.

Following the gazettal today, the Amendment Regulation will be tabled at the Legislative Council for negative vetting on May 13 and will come into operation on October 1, 2020. The fee waiver would apply to annual returns delivered to the CR between October 1, 2020, and September 30, 2022 (both dates inclusive).

SFST visits Companies Registry

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, visited the Companies Registry (CR) today (May 8) to view its operation after full resumption of public services.

Accompanied by the Registrar of Companies, Ms Ada Chung, Mr Hui visited various sections including the New Companies Section, the Public Search Section and the Document Management Section in the CR. He also chatted with the staff there to better understand their work conditions and the services that they provide.

Mr Hui said, "The COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a heavy blow to Hong Kong's overall economy. To help enterprises cope with their operating pressure amid the economic downturn, the Financial Secretary announced in the 2020-21 Budget the waiver of registration fees for annual returns, except for late delivery, charged by the CR for two years.

"And with a view to encouraging the wider use of the CR's electronic services, we also propose to reduce the fees payable in relation to the incorporation of companies, including registration of non-Hong Kong companies, through electronic means by 10 per cent."

The Companies (Fees) (Amendment) Regulation 2020 was gazetted today, and will be tabled at the Legislative Council for negative vetting next Wednesday (May 13) for the waiver and reduction to take effect from October 1, 2020.

The waiver of registration fees for annual returns will benefit about 1.4 million companies. The revenue forgone will be about \$212 million between 2020-21 and 2022-23. As for the reduction of fees payable in relation to the incorporation of companies through electronic means, the reduction in the related revenue is about \$12 million per annum.

Mr Hui said he was pleased to note that the CR has been providing electronic services for filing of documents and company searches, which can significantly enhance the efficiency in company incorporation and information search. He appealed to the department to adopt wider use of technology, saying that a business-friendly environment is needed more than ever in the process of economic recovery.

Mr Hui also expressed his gratitude to CR staff for their dedication in providing public services amid the pandemic.