

Appointments to Insurance Appeals Tribunal

Under the authority delegated by the Chief Executive, the Financial Secretary has appointed six new members and re-appointed 20 serving members to the panel of the Insurance Appeals Tribunal (IAT) for a new term from July 26, 2019, to July 25, 2021.

The panel membership of the IAT for the new term is as follows:

New appointees

Professor Chan Koon-hung
Ms Kerry Ching Kim-wai
Ms Julianne Jen
Dr Gladie Lui Man-ching
Professor Phyllis Mo Lai-lan
Mr Simon Tang Shu-pui

Re-appointed members

Mr Frederick Chan Hing-fai
Ms Karen Chan Ka-yin
Professor Stella Cho Lung Pui-lan
Mr Alex Chu Wing-yiu
Professor Goo Say-hak
Mr Marvin Hsu Tsun-fai
Mr Eric Hui Kam-kwai
Professor Michael Hui King-man
Mr Adrian King
Miss Anna-Mae Koo Mei-jong
Ms Juan Leung Chung-yan
Dr Miranda Lou Lai-wah
Mr Philip Mak Shun-pong
Mr Andrew Mak Yip-shing
Professor Joshua Mok Ka-ho
Dr Patrick Poon Sun-cheong
Mr Bhabani Sankar Rath
Mr Gary Soo Kwok-leung
Mr Charles Yang Chuen-liang
Dr Samuel Yung Wing-ki

Announcing the appointments today (July 26), a Government spokesman said, "The IAT provides an effective safeguard to ensure that the relevant regulatory decisions made by the Insurance Authority (IA) are reasonable and fair."

The Government also paid tribute to outgoing members. They are Mr Dennis Ho Chiu-ping, Ms Phoebe Tse Siu-ling and Dr William Wong Ming-fung, SC.

"Their service to the IAT provided an effective safeguard for the proper regulation of the insurance industry in Hong Kong," the spokesman said.

The IAT is a statutory tribunal established under the Insurance Ordinance (Cap. 41) to review specified decisions made by the IA. The IAT consists of the chairperson and two ordinary members appointed by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury from a pool of panel members on the recommendation of the chairperson. The chairperson of the IAT is Mr Douglas Lam Tak-yip, SC.

Lifesaving services suspended at Golden Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

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

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (July 26) that due to an insufficient number of lifeguards on duty, the lifesaving services at Golden Beach in Tuen Mun District is suspended until further notice.

First aid service will be maintained at the beach.

Crime figures in the first half of 2019

In the first half of 2019, a total of 25 295 crime cases were recorded, representing a decrease of 1 255 cases or 4.7% when compared with the same period of last year. The overall crime figures hit a record low since 1977 in which half-year crime statistics were first kept.

There were 3 970 cases of violent crime in the first half of 2019, a decrease of 9% when compared with the same period of last year.

1. Major crimes recorded decreases

In the first half of this year, crimes recorded decreases included homicide, robbery, burglary, serious drug offences, wounding and serious assault, and criminal intimidation, etc.

There were 11 cases of homicide, representing a decrease of 6 cases or 35.3% when compared with the same period in 2018. These cases arose from disputes between couples, family members, friends, residents in residential care homes, etc. All cases were detected.

There were 44 cases of robbery reported, representing a significant drop of 38 cases or 46.3% when compared with the same period of last year. The number of street and convenience store robberies decreased by 31 cases or 63.3%. Police will continue to strengthen the work on intelligence and investigation, including collaboration with the Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies, to prevent and detect robberies so as to neutralize related crime syndicates.

A total of 586 serious drug cases were recorded, representing a drop of 146 cases or 19.9% when compared with the same period in 2018. The seizure amount of cocaine, ketamine, cannabis and heroin increased while the amount of methamphetamine (Ice) seized dropped. The increase in the seizure amount was attributed to multiple successful operations conducted by the Police and the Customs and Excise Department respectively. In recent years, some overseas countries and regions legalized the use of cannabis for medical or recreational purpose. Nonetheless, possessing, consuming or trafficking cannabis or products containing controlled cannabis compounds constitutes a criminal offence in Hong Kong. Members of the public should pay attention to relevant local legislation while traveling abroad during summer vacation, and be mindful of products containing cannabis compounds so as to avoid contravening the law inadvertently by bringing them back to Hong Kong.

2. Major crimes recorded increases

In the first half of 2019, crimes that registered increases included deception and sexual offence.

A total of 3 855 cases of deception were recorded, representing a rise of 184 cases or 5% when compared with the same period in 2018. Such increase mainly stemmed from telephone deception and e-shopping fraud.

2.1 Telephone deception

Telephone Deception totalled 231 cases, representing a rise of 66 cases or 40%. The two common modus operandi were "Pretend Officials" (108 cases, increase of 83.1%) and "Guess Who" (122 cases, increase of 22%). There was only 1 case of "Detained Son" recorded (decrease of 83.3%). The pecuniary loss involved in telephone deception totalled \$53 million, being a 4-fold increase. Near 90% of the loss was attributed to "Pretend Officials" cases, pecuniary loss of which totalled \$46 million, reaching a 9-fold increase.

Other than instructing the victims to make deposit to designated bank accounts, fraudsters also lured the victims to set up new bank accounts, and subsequently asked them to disclose the banking details and passwords on various pretexts in order to have direct control over victims' bank accounts. This often siphoned off all savings of the victims in the account causing the significant increase in total monetary loss.

Telephone deception became more prevalent among the young people. Victims aged below 30 increased by around 40% over the same period of last year. Majority of them were victims of "Pretend Officials".

In light of this, Police will continue to alert the public of the latest modus operandi through different channels and social media, including the Hong Kong Police Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Weibo, etc.

2.2 E-shopping fraud

A total of 1 084 cases of e-shopping fraud were reported, representing a rise of 135 cases or 14.2%. The total loss was \$13 million, representing a drop of 27.3%.

To raise the awareness of the public, Police has strengthened collaboration with online trading platforms and mobile apps to disseminate anti-deception messages to remind the public to remain vigilant when trading online.

By the end of June this year, the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC), which has been established for two years, has successfully intercepted over \$2.7 billion of payment in collaboration with the banking sector. This year, Police managed to intercept a remittance of \$21 million to an overseas bank, in cooperation with overseas law enforcement agency for the first time.

2.3 Sexual offence

In the first half of 2019, an increase was recorded for sexual offence, including rape and indecent assault. There were 29 rape cases, representing an increase of 6 cases or 26.1% when compared with the same period of last year. One case was committed by stranger and has been detected. For indecent assault, 573 cases were recorded, representing an increase of 36 cases or 6.7%.

Cases in which the victims acquainted with the offenders via the Internet totalled 16 cases, which was the same as last year.

To prevent sexual offences, Police will enhance publicity and education, particularly on social networking traps, on the Internet, at schools and during activities of youth organizations.

3. Triads, domestic violence and youth crimes

Other cases of public concern include triad, domestic violence and youth crimes.

In the first half of 2019, triad-related crimes totalled 777 cases, representing a drop of 6.9% when compared with the same period of last year. During the period, the Force mounted a series of large-scale anti-triad operations, including the territory-wide "Operation LEVINGTON" in April. Over 500 persons were arrested for drug trafficking, money laundering, loansharking, operating gambling establishment, possession of offensive weapon, etc. In addition, to combat triad-controlled illegal gambling activities in licensed game centres, Police mounted "Operation WISEBOLD" with 135 persons arrested and seizure of more than 150 game machines used for gambling.

Police will show no tolerance or leniency towards triad-related crimes, and will continue to proactively combat all triad activities, including conducting large-scale intelligence-led anti-crime operations, undercover operations, as well as conducting financial investigation to intercept crime proceeds of the syndicates.

There were 633 domestic violence (crime) cases in the first half in 2019, representing a decrease of 9.3%. A total of 294 cases of domestic violence (miscellaneous) were received, representing a rise of 52.3%. Family violence (crime) totalled 398 cases, representing a drop of 17.6%.

A total of 1 234 youths were arrested for crimes in the first half of 2019, representing a drop of 17.7% when compared with the same period of last year. Most of them were arrested for shop theft, wounding and serious assault, and miscellaneous theft.

4. Conclusion

€€€

Combating technology crime continues to be one of the Force's operational priorities. The Internet and social media have become part of citizens' daily life, such as for online trading and making friends. More fraudsters take advantage of online channels to prey on potential victims. To raise the vigilance of the public, Police will alert citizens of the latest pitfalls through different platforms, including the media, social media of the Hong Kong Police Force, ADCC, etc. Police will also enhance the overall capabilities in detecting technology crime and further equip investigating officers with professional knowledge via trainings.

Police will continue to carry out duties with utmost dedication, serve faithfully and impartially, and maintain the law and order in our best endeavors.

Three performances to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Tong Tik-sang's death

Cantonese opera virtuosos, in "A Showcase of Cantonese Operas by Tong Tik-sang", will perform three selected works from Tong Tik-sang, namely "All Because of a Smile", "The Dream Meeting between Emperor Wu of Han and Lady Wei" and "Madame Wild Rose" in September to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Tong's death.

Performing virtuosos will include Loong Koon-tin, Nam Fung, Chan Hung-chun, Lui Hung-kwong, Chan Ka-ming and Sun Kim-long. Details of the performances are as follows:

September 2 (Monday), 7.30pm
Auditorium, Tsuen Wan Town Hall
Programme: "All Because of a Smile"
Tickets: \$140 to \$280

Synopsis: Fan Bingning is a prized housemaid in the residence of Jinan governor Wen Shoulian. At the marriage proposal of the high-born Yang Yuelou, Shoulian releases her to marry while he weds Yan Xijiao at his mother's behest. Yuelou's uncle, Daomang, a greedy gambler, kills Yuelou for money and implicates Bingning. At the trial, the judge is Shoulian. Delighted at seeing her former master, Bingning breaks into a smile. Daomang uses the smile as an excuse to smear Bingning of adultery, and bringing pressure from the military chief to bear, forces Shoulian to indict Bingning and put her in prison, pending death. Bingning gives birth to a son in prison and places the baby under Shoulian's care, hoping her son will clear her name and redress his father's untimely death when he grows up. The disaffected Shoulian resigns from office in order to bring up baby Xiaolou. Eighteen years later...

September 3 (Tuesday), 7.30pm
Auditorium, Ko Shan Theatre New Wing
Programme: "The Dream Meeting between Emperor Wu of Han and Lady Wei"
Tickets: \$140 to \$320

Synopsis: Wei Ziqing is a songstress at a prince's palace. Her brother Wei Qing, a slave charged with taking care of the horses, is in love with the widowed Princess Pingyang. In order to free her lover from servitude, the Princess plots with Dongfang Shuo to arrange a romantic meeting between Ziqing and Emperor Wu, who is on his way to a sacrificial ritual. Ziqing is conferred the title of Lady Wei and is inducted into the palace to seek an audience with the Empress Dowager. The jealous Empress Chen secretly summons her brother to kill Ziqing but he fails. Emperor Wu sends Wei Qing to lead a military expedition to the west. Ziqing lives in confinement in Changmen, where the Emperor visits her in secret and is delighted to learn that she is pregnant by him. But the situation turns when the news is unfortunately leaked to the Empress...

September 7 (Saturday), 7.30pm
Auditorium, Tuen Mun Town Hall
Programme: "Madame Wild Rose"
Tickets: \$140 to \$260

Synopsis: To outsiders, Dou Mei (Wild Rose) and her elder brother Pihai make their living selling swords and keeping a tavern, but in fact, they steal their guests' swords, which Pihai tweaks and sells them for new. Three years ago, Wild Rose and the Crown Prince Zhu Erkui were lovers, and she had given him a sword as gift. Later, Erkui's uncle Zhu Yunwen ascends the throne. He travels incognito to visit the Dou brother and sister, with the purpose of bringing them to live in the palace. When Erkui returns from his expedition, he believes that Yunwen has usurped his throne and seized his beloved. He vents his fury by wreaking havoc in the imperial court. Empress Dowager Pan wants to kill Erkui, but Yunwen saves his life by pretending to insult him and sends him into exile. Erkui invades the State of Yan, and after a number of mishaps, becomes first the consort to Princess Ma Yu'e, before becoming King of Yan. He leads an army southwards and kills indiscriminately, to the misery of his people...

"A Showcase of Cantonese Operas by Tong Tik-sang" is presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. Tickets are now available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7325 or visit

www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/chinese_opera/programs_845.html.

A pre-performance talk and a post-performance talk (in Cantonese) will be held. The pre-performance talk will be held at 7.30pm on August 7 (Wednesday) at AC2, 4/F, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre. It will include speakers Loong Koon-tin and Sun Kim-long. The post-performance talk will be held at 2.30pm on September 8 (Sunday) at AC1, 4/F, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Speakers for this talk include Loong Koon-tin and Nam Fung. Admission is free with limited seats available on a first-come, first-served basis.

HAD clarifies rumours

In response to rumours circulating on mobile instant messaging applications, claiming that officials from home affairs will visit the public with official letters to verify the validity of their personal identification documents in preparation for the upcoming election, a Home Affairs Department spokesperson today (July 26) clarified that the claims are totally unfounded and appealed to the public to stay vigilant.