

Transcript of remarks by SCMA at media session on EAC's report on REO's loss of Register of Electors

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, at a media session today (July 24) at the Central Government Offices on the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC)'s independent investigation report on the loss of a Register of Electors:

Reporter: When exactly did the Chief Electoral Officer first find out about the loss of the Register of Electors? Why did it take so long, nearly two years, for the government to make public the findings? Was there any cover-up involved? Is there any need for a full revamp of the personnel involved in the incident?

Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs: Thank you very much for your questions. The EAC's investigation report has set out the facts and findings of the investigation. We have also explained before what follow-up actions we had taken when it came to our notice that there was a possibility of losing the Register. Once we confirmed the Register was lost, we had taken all necessary follow-up actions to remediate the situation. What's your second question?

Reporter: Why did the government take so long to make public the findings about the loss (of the Register of Electors)? More than two years.

Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs: The investigation report also explains that because of the deficiency in the internal management of the REO (Registration and Electoral Office) and in the handling of electoral materials, when the Register of Electors failed to be found, there was not an immediate reporting mechanism within the REO (for staff) to report to the seniors. Even after it had come to the notice of the seniors, because of their lack of sensitivity, no proper immediate follow-up actions had been taken. So it is important for us to set out an internal guideline within the department to make sure that in future there will be a mechanism in place to make sure that whenever there is a possibility (of any loss of electoral materials), this will be reported to the seniors and necessary follow-up actions will be taken.

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

CHP investigates two suspected food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (July 24) investigating two suspected food poisoning clusters affecting eight persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The first cluster involved three males and three females aged 15 to 64, who developed abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and fever about 11 to 36 hours after having dinner at a restaurant in Causeway Bay on July 18.

Another cluster involved two females, aged 49 and 52, who developed similar symptoms about 28 to 37 hours after having dinner at the same restaurant in the same evening.

Six of the affected persons sought medical advice and none required hospitalisation. All affected persons are in a stable condition.

"We have alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to the incident and investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

To prevent food-borne diseases, members of the public are reminded to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times. When dining out:

- Patronise only reliable and licensed restaurants;
 - Avoid eating raw seafood;
 - Be a discerning consumer in choosing cold dishes, including sashimi, sushi and raw oysters, at a buffet;
 - Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hot pot or barbecue meal;
 - Handle raw and cooked foods carefully and separate them completely during the cooking process;
 - Use two sets of chopsticks and utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
 - Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
 - Drink boiled water;
 - Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine and wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
 - Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.
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Inpatient absconds from Castle Peak Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Castle Peak Hospital (CPH) made the following appeal today (July 24) regarding an inpatient who has absconded from the hospital:

A 47-year-old male inpatient was found missing at about 2.40pm today after arriving at the Main Block of Tuen Mun Hospital under escort by staff from CPH for medical follow-up. CPH is very concerned about the incident and reported to the Police immediately. The hospital will fully co-operate with the Police to locate the patient.

The patient is 1.69 metres tall and of medium build with black short hair. He was wearing a blue jacket and green trousers at the time he absconded. The hospital appeals to the public to contact the Report Room of Tuen Mun Police Station at 3661 5800 or call CPH at 2456 7111 if they know the whereabouts of the patient.

The incident has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office via the Advance Incident Reporting System. The hospital will communicate with the patient's relatives to provide necessary assistance.

Correctional officers intercept smuggling of suspected dangerous drugs into Tai Lam Centre for Women

â€‹ Correctional officers at Tai Lam Centre for Women today (July 24) intercepted a female remand person in custody smuggling suspected dangerous drugs into the centre by concealing them inside her body.

The 37-year-old person in custody was remanded in the institution for the offence of trafficking in a dangerous drug on July 20. After undergoing X-ray body scanning, she was suspected to have swallowed suspected dangerous drugs before admission. She was therefore separated and put under close monitoring.

At 2.25pm today, she discharged one pack of a suspected dangerous drug with a weight of about 19 grams wrapped in plastic. The case has been reported to the Police for follow-up.

A spokesperson for the Correctional Services Department said, "The department takes every measure to stop the introduction of dangerous drugs or unauthorised articles into correctional institutions in order to maintain good order and discipline and a drug-free environment for all persons in custody."

Grant approved for cyclone victims in Odisha, India

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has accepted the advice of the Disaster Relief Fund Advisory Committee and approved from the Disaster Relief Fund a grant of \$4.477 million to Habitat for Humanity Hong Kong to provide relief for cyclone victims in Odisha, India.

Announcing the grant today (July 24), a spokesman for the Government said that the cyclone had affected more than 15 million people and caused severe damages to houses and public facilities in Odisha, India. The grant will be used to provide household and hygiene items as well as temporary shelter kits to benefit around 25 000 cyclone victims. The Committee hoped the grant would facilitate the provision of timely relief to the victims and help restore them to their normal living. The grant, together with those approved earlier for this cyclone in Odisha, India, will take the accumulative value of grants and number of beneficiaries to \$16.983 million and 101 150 respectively. As the targeted localities of relief agencies are different, there will be no overlapping of resources.

"To ensure that the money is used for the designated purposes, Habitat for Humanity Hong Kong will be asked to submit an evaluation report and an audited account on the use of the grant after the relief project has been completed," the spokesman said.