

SHA visits polling station of 2019 Kaifong Representative Election (with photo)

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, today (January 20) visited the polling station for Kaifong Representative Election for Cheung Chau Market Town on the last polling day of the 2019 Rural Ordinary Election (ROE).

The 2019 ROE is arranged as stipulated in the Rural Representative Election Ordinance and its subsidiary legislation, which is conducted by the Home Affairs Department and supervised by the Electoral Affairs Commission. The Ordinance covers two types of rural representatives to be elected in accordance with the law, namely the Village Representatives and the Kaifong Representatives. The Village Representative (including Indigenous Inhabitant Representative and Resident Representative) Election was held on two consecutive Sundays from January 6 to 13, while today is the polling day of the Kaifong Representative Election.

"I am delighted to see the Kaifong Representative Election is properly arranged. I believe today's election will be held smoothly," Mr Lau said.

Mr Lau also expressed his gratitude to all supporting parties, especially the Chairman of the Electoral Affairs Commission, Mr Justice Barnabas Fung Wah, and Commission members Professor Fanny Cheung and Mr Arthur Luk, SC. They have been working tirelessly to monitor the polling and counting of votes to ensure the election is held in accordance with the law.

There are 82 validly nominated candidates in the Kaifong Representative Election. 65 candidates from Cheung Chau Market Town contest for 39 seats, while the 17 candidates of the Kaifong representatives of Peng Chau Market Town were returned uncontested.



HA statement in response to appeals from nursing staff union

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

In response to the views expressed today (January 20) by a nursing staff union towards heavy workload in public hospitals during winter surge, the Hospital Authority (HA) spokesperson responded as follows:

There has been significant rapid increase in demand for public hospital services since the commencement of winter surge and Hong Kong entering the influenza season. HA is fully aware of the tremendous workload faced by the frontline and has committed to support the frontline by every possible means.

In 2018-19, HA has already added 574 beds according to the Annual Plan. HA has also allocated \$520 million upfront to the hospital clusters to enable their early preparation in manpower deployment and supportive measures for the opening of time-limited beds and implementation of contingent measures, in anticipation of the increase in workload.

HA has already enhanced the flexibility of application of special honorarium scheme (SHS) to a minimum of one hour duty since last December. To further encourage staff and to boost morale, HA will have a one-off 12-week arrangement to increase the rate of SHS allowance by 10 per cent from January 28.

To address the nursing manpower issue, HA will recruit 2 230 nurses this year (2018-19), resulting in a net increase of 830 nurses after accounting for the attrition. To alleviate the workload of frontline staff during the winter surge, public hospitals have recruited about 800 part-time and temporary nurses, apart from over 40 nurses recruited through the newly established Locum Office. Hospitals will continue to recruit patient service and clerical support staff in wards to support nurses in handling patient care and clerical duties.

HA will continue to listen to the views of healthcare staff unions and frontline staff. HA would also like to express its gratitude once again to all frontline staff for their commitment and dedication in taking care of the patients.

2019 Kaifong Representative Election turnout rates (as at 3.30pm)

Turnout rate for the 2019 Kaifong Representative Election for Cheung Chau Market Town which began at 8.30am today (January 20) is 29.91% (as at 3.30pm).

No. 3 alarm fire in Tuen Mun (5)

The fire broke out at Tuen Mun River Trade Terminal this morning (January 20) was upgraded to No. 3 alarm at 4.52am. It was surrounded at 9.30am, brought under control at 10.31am and largely put out at 1.34pm.

Firemen used eight jets, two turntable ladder monitors and two roof monitors, and mobilised eight breathing apparatus teams to fight the blaze.

No casualties have been reported so far.

2019 Kaifong Representative Election turnout rates (as at 1.30pm)

Turnout rate for the 2019 Kaifong Representative Election for Cheung Chau Market Town which began at 8.30am today (January 20) is 22.26% (as at 1.30pm).