

Burial and cremation services to be suspended on Lunar New Year's Day

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) announced today (January 18) that services for the disposal of the dead will be suspended on Lunar New Year's Day (February 5).

An FEHD spokesman said, "All cemeteries and crematoria offices of the department will be closed on Lunar New Year's Day. No coffins will be accepted for burial at public cemeteries and no cremations will be undertaken at public crematoria.

"Cremation services and burial services will resume normal operation on February 6."

Seventeen immigration offenders arrested

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a territory-wide anti-illegal worker operation codenamed "Twilight" from January 14 to 17. A total of 12 illegal workers and five suspected employers were arrested.

During the operation, ImmD Task Force officers raided 34 target locations including a company, construction sites, a factory, a flower shop, residential buildings, restaurants, shopping malls and warehouses. Twelve illegal workers and five employers were arrested. The illegal workers comprised five men and seven women, aged 31 to 59. Among them, one man was a holder of recognisance form, which prohibits him from taking any employment. In addition, two men and three women were suspected of using and being in possession of forged Hong Kong identity cards while another man and woman were also suspected of using and being in possession of Hong Kong identity cards relating to another person. Meanwhile, five men, aged 30 to 52, were suspected of employing the illegal workers.

"Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties," an ImmD spokesman said.

The spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases. It is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

[Speech by CE at opening ceremony of](#)

SPARK (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the opening ceremony of SPARK: The Science and Art of Creativity today (January 18):

Jeff (Director of the British Council in Hong Kong, Mr Jeff Streeter), Andy (British Consul General to Hong Kong and Macao, Mr Andrew Heyn), Faye Wei Wei (creator of Neon SPARK artwork), ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It's a great pleasure to join you today for the opening of SPARK: The Science and Art of Creativity.

I must say I'm delighted with the British Council's pitch-perfect choice of venue. Tai Kwun, the former Central Police Station Compound, is now a centre for heritage and arts, a dynamic new Hong Kong cultural landmark. And Tai Kwun is not only the venue for SPARK but also the subject of a featured event. The UK's Purcell, one of three architectural firms behind Tai Kwun's revitalisation, will lead walking tours here, detailing how old and new have come together – and so remarkably well – at Tai Kwun.

The Tai Kwun architectural and heritage spotlight is one of more than 30 events taking place here over the next three days and nights. Each has been designed with surpassing creativity involving some 200 UK and Hong Kong artists, scientists, academia and innovators from more than 50 universities and cultural institutions.

I am truly impressed. Of course, it's not the first time Hong Kong has been dazzled by British ingenuity. Just last March, Hong Kong's Asia Society hosted the GREAT Festival of Innovation, smartly presented by the UK Department for International Trade. These and many other such events speak of the longstanding and long-rewarding relations that exist between the economies and the people of Hong Kong and the UK.

Such relations are set to get even closer in the future. I visited London in September 2017 as the Chief Executive to attend the Hong Kong Dinner, which is an annual tradition celebrating the ties that bind us in government and business, in culture, history, education and many other aspects. During my trip, I met with many senior government officials, members of parliament, businessmen, education professionals, etc, and set in motion many collaboration initiatives between Hong Kong and the UK. Last March, Dr Liam Fox, Secretary of State for International Trade, visited Hong Kong. Aside from opening the GREAT Festival of Innovation, Dr Fox signed a joint statement on closer collaboration in trade and economic matters with our Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Edward Yau. Then, last September, Chief Secretary for Administration Matthew Cheung signed an MOU on Cultural Co-operation between Hong Kong and the UK while visiting London.

Last month, I officiated at the opening ceremony of an exhibition at the

Hong Kong Science Museum. "Treasures of Time" is jointly organised by the Hong Kong Science Museum, the Science Museum, London, and Beijing's Palace Museum. The "timely" exhibition displays about 120 rare mechanical clocks and watches from the Palace Museum collection; most were tributes from Europe presented by Western missionaries to the Qing court. Among the exhibition highlights is a workshop depicting 18th century Europe. That workshop, I'm pleased to note, was brilliantly recreated with tools and equipment provided by the Science Museum, London. This fabulous exhibition illustrates that Hong Kong offers the best platform for cultural exchanges between East and West.

For SPARK, we have the British Council in Hong Kong to thank. The British Council has been instrumental in presenting the best of British culture and education in Hong Kong since 1948, more than 70 years ago. And I still vividly remember Antony Gormley's Event Horizon, showcased here by the British Council and brought to us a few years ago, which truly amazed many with Sir Antony Gormley's life-size sculptures. SPARK today is no exception. The Festival's four themes – Creative Cities, Art meets Science, Altered Realities and Future Skills – have been designed for people of all ages. But they will no doubt resonate in particular with our youth, offering insight and inspiration that could well lead to creative career choices – in culture and the arts, the sciences and education. I have said on many occasions that Hong Kong's future is predicated on our young people, their talent, their vision and their innovative spirit. So I am grateful to the British Council for bringing SPARK: The Science and Art of Creativity, to Hong Kong.

SPARK reflects Hong Kong-British co-operation at its finest. SPARK is about creating connections, about finding innovative ways for the people of Hong Kong and the UK to excel. I look forward to many more cultural exchanges between us.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish the Festival a resounding success, and everyone a New Year blessed with health, happiness and boundless creativity. Thank you very much.



Lunar New Year auction of vehicle registration marks to be held on February 24

The Transport Department today (January 18) announced that the Lunar New Year auction of vehicle registration marks will be held on February 24 (Sunday), at Meeting Room S221, L2, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 45 vehicle registration marks will be put up for public auction. Forty-three of them are traditional vehicle registration marks (TVRMs) and two of them are personalised vehicle registration marks (PVRMs). The list of marks has been posted at the department's website, www.td.gov.hk," a department spokesman said.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following important points:

- (a) Successful bidders are required to produce the following documents for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after the successful bidding:
 - (i) the identity document of the successful bidder;
 - (ii) the identity document of the purchaser if it is different from the successful bidder;
 - (iii) a copy of the certificate of incorporation if the purchaser is a body corporate; and
 - (iv) a crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". Any bidders who wish to bid for both TVRMs and PVRMs should bring at least two crossed cheques for payment of auction prices. (For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed.) Successful bidders may also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS), but are reminded to note the maximum transfer amount in the same day of the payment card. Payment by post-dated cheque, cash, credit card or other methods will not be accepted.
- (b) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of Registration Mark or the Memorandum of Sale of Personalised Vehicle Registration Mark immediately after the bidding. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the Memorandum will not be permitted.
- (c) A registration mark can only be assigned to a motor vehicle which is registered in the name of the purchaser. The Certificate of Incorporation must be produced immediately by the purchaser if a vehicle registration mark purchased is to be registered under the name of a body corporate.

(d) The display of a vehicle registration mark on a motor vehicle should be in compliance with the requirements stipulated in Schedule 4 to the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations.

(e) Any change to the arrangement of characters of a PVRM, including display in single row only as auctioned, will not be allowed.

(f) Special vehicle registration marks are non-transferable. Where the ownership of a motor vehicle with a special vehicle registration mark is transferred, the allocation of the special vehicle registration mark shall be cancelled.

(g) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the vehicle registration mark to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the registration mark within 12 months, allocation of the registration mark will be cancelled and arranged for re-allocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

For other auction details, please refer to the "Guidance Notes – Auction of Vehicle Registration Marks" and "Guidance Notes – Auction of PVRMs", which can be downloaded from the department's website, www.td.gov.hk.

Temporary traffic arrangements in North Point this Sunday

The Transport Department (TD) today (January 18) reminded the public that to facilitate the commissioning of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass, the following temporary traffic arrangements will be implemented at a section of the Island Eastern Corridor (IEC) westbound near North Point this Sunday (January 20) at the time specified below:

From 1.30am to 5.30am on January 20

The IEC westbound between Independent Commission Against Corruption Headquarters Building to Henrietta Secondary School, the slip road connecting King's Road westbound near Healthy Street Central and the IEC westbound, the slip road connecting King's Road westbound near Tong Shui Road and the IEC westbound, the slip road connecting Tong Shui Road northbound and the IEC westbound, and Wharf Road eastbound between Provident Centre access road and Tong Shui Road will be temporarily closed to all vehicular traffic.

Appropriate traffic signs will be erected on-site to guide motorists. Motorists are advised to drive with care. They may also consider using

alternative routes.

Details of the temporary traffic arrangements are now available on the department's website (www.td.gov.hk).