

HKSAR Government clarifies fake news on water discharge from Shenzhen

Regarding fake news on social media saying Shenzhen will discharge water shortly and may cause flooding in the North District, a spokesman for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (September 1) clarified that the message is totally groundless and fictitious.

The spokesman said that members of the public should pay attention to announcements on Government official channels. If the HKSAR Government is notified of water discharge from Shenzhen in accordance with the established mechanism, the Government will inform the public as soon as possible and take relevant actions and arrangements to protect public safety.

The spokesman condemned the people who issued the fake news and said the law enforcement agency will take follow-up action accordingly. The spokesman urged the public not to believe in fabricated rumours lightly.

Regularisation of Pilot Project on Tier 1 Support Services in Kindergartens/Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) announced today (September 1) the regularisation of the Pilot Project on Tier 1 Support Services in Kindergartens (KGs)/Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres (KG-cum-CCCs) (Tier 1 Pilot Project) in the 2023/24 school year and its integration with the On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (OPRS).

To strengthen support for pre-school children with special needs, the SWD implemented a 37-month Tier 1 Pilot Project in the 2020/21 school year. Early intervention services are provided for children who are awaiting assessment by Child Assessment Centres (CACs) under the Department of Health (DH), or assessed by CACs to have borderline developmental problems.

In view of the satisfactory results, the Government has allocated additional resources to regularise the Tier 1 Support Services and extend them to cover nearly 900 pre-primary institutions. The Services will also be integrated with OPRS, which support pre-school children with mild disabilities, to offer comprehensive and appropriate assistance to pre-^{re}school children with different levels of special needs, their teachers

and parents through interdisciplinary service teams under a school-based and integrated approach.

In preparation for the regularisation of the Tier 1 Support Services, the SWD has organised engagement sessions with different stakeholders including the Education Bureau, the DH, pre-primary institutions, service operators, parents, social workers of related service units, etc, to listen to their views, and enhance the stakeholders' understanding of the services and the service implementation arrangements.

The list of KGs/KG-cum-CCCs participating in OPRS is available on the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/oprs/index_en.htm#s7). Parents interested in the service can approach these participating KGs/KG-cum-CCCs for enquiries.

Regularisation of Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly

The Government announced today (September 1) the regularisation of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher (CCSV) for the Elderly. The Pilot Scheme will be renamed Community Care Service Voucher Scheme for the Elderly (the Scheme) and new measures of the Scheme will be introduced.

A spokesman of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said that in line with the policy objective of "ageing in place as the core, institutional care as back-up" in the provision of elderly services, the Scheme adopts a "money-follows-the-user" approach, allowing eligible elderly persons to choose suitable community care services that suit their individual needs. Under the principle of co-payment by CCSV holders and the Government, elderly persons with lower affordability could receive more government subsidy. At the end of July this year, a total of 7 377 elderly persons were receiving CCSV services.

New measures of the Scheme include:

(i) Increasing the number of beneficiaries of the Scheme from the existing 8 000 to 10 000 in 2023/24 and then to 12 000 in 2025/26 in response to the keen demand for community care services;

(ii) Expanding the applicable scope of the CCSV to the rental of assistive technology products to enhance the quality of life of the elderly persons and alleviate the pressure on their carers;

(iii) Allowing CCSV holders to purchase services from two recognised service providers at the same time, thus increasing the flexibility of using the

CCSV; and

(iv) Launching the Voucher Information System for the Elderly (VISE), through which CCSV holders will be able to access real-time information on voucher usage, search recognised service providers, and download the monthly service timetable to facilitate their receiving of services in a timely manner.

Elderly persons, their family members or carers wishing to participate in the Scheme can make use of the calculator set in the VISE to estimate their co-payment levels for reference. For more details, please visit the website of the VISE at vise.swd.gov.hk/vise/.

The SWD hopes that the new measures of the Scheme can attract more eligible elderly persons to use CCSV services and encourage more service providers to participate in the Scheme.

For more details of the Scheme, please refer to www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_elderly/sub_csselderly/id_pscsv/ or call the Community Care Service Voucher Office at 3107 3013.

Interest on Tax Reserve Certificates

The Government Gazette published today (September 1) contains a Legal Notice to the effect that the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury has authorised a change in the rate of interest payable on Tax Reserve Certificates. From September 4, 2023 the new annual rate of interest will be 0.9250 per cent against the current rate of 0.8833 per cent, i.e. the new rate will be \$0.0771 per month per \$100.

Tax Reserve Certificates bear simple interest, and interest is calculated monthly (including part of a month) from the date of purchase to the date of payment of tax.

Interest is only credited when certificates are used to pay tax and no interest is due where the principal value of a certificate is repaid to its holder.

The rate of interest payable on Tax Reserve Certificates is periodically revised in line with the market trend. Currently, it is reviewed every month based on the average prevailing interest rate for the 12-month time deposit for \$100,000 to \$499,999 offered by the three note-issuing banks.

The new rate will apply to all certificates purchased on or after September 4, 2023. Certificates purchased before September 4, 2023, will continue to earn interest at the rates prevailing on their respective purchase dates. Below is a summary of the interest rates for the past periods:

For certificates purchased on or after December 5, 2022, and before January 3, 2023:	0.4000 per cent per annum
For certificates purchased on or after January 3, 2023, and before March 6, 2023:	0.5833 per cent per annum
For certificates purchased on or after March 6, 2023, and before April 3, 2023:	0.7500 per cent per annum
For certificates purchased on or after April 3, 2023, and before June 5, 2023:	0.7667 per cent per annum
For certificates purchased on or after June 5, 2023, and before August 7, 2023:	0.8083 per cent per annum
For certificates purchased on or after August 7, 2023, and before September 4, 2023:	0.8833 per cent per annum
For certificates purchased on or after September 4, 2023, until further notice:	0.9250 per cent per annum

This is always subject to the general rule that interest ceases to accrue after 36 complete months.

[Typhoon Saola situation report \(3\)](#)

The No. 8 Northwest Gale or Storm Signal issued by the Hong Kong Observatory at 2.40am today (September 1) remains in force.

The Home Affairs Department has so far opened 34 temporary shelters in various districts and 188 people have sought refuge at the shelters.

As at 11am today, the 1823 Government Call Centre has received two reports of fallen tree. The Drainage Services Department has received three confirmed flooding cases. No reports of landslide have been received so far.

According to the Hospital Authority, as at 10.40am today, one man has been injured during the typhoon period and sought medical treatment at the Accident and Emergency Department of public hospitals.