

Assistant clerk of works of Independent Checking Unit under Office of Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) tests positive for COVID-19

The Transport and Housing Bureau today (January 22) learned that an assistant clerk of works of the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) under the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) has tested positive for COVID-19. He is staying at a hospital for treatment.

He worked on the fourth floor of Lung Cheung Office Block (LCOB) in Wong Tai Sin, and the office is not open to the public. He had been wearing masks and following relevant disease prevention measures at work. He did not have contact with members of the public recently while performing duties. He last worked in the office on January 20.

The offices on the fourth floor of LCOB have been fully cleaned and sterilised in accordance with the guidelines of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP). Staff and employees of the outsourced contractor working on the same floor and staff who have close work contact with the infected person have been arranged to undergo viral tests.

The ICU will continue to maintain close liaison with the CHP and co-operate with its disease prevention measures and quarantine work.

HKSAR Government strongly objects to European Parliament's resolution

â€‹The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (January 22) strongly objected to the European Parliament's "resolution" of yesterday relating to Hong Kong, saying the "resolution" is biased, politically motivated and does not reflect the truth.

National security is a matter within the purview of the Central Authorities. Whether it is a unitary or federal state, legislation on national security is invariably carried out by the central authorities. The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the HKSAR (the National Security Law) was passed by the National People's

Congress Standing Committee, the highest organ of state power of the People's Republic of China, to establish and improve the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard national security.

Safeguarding national security through legislation is in line with international practice. Different countries have their respective national security laws. Contrary to politically-motivated rhetoric that the National Security Law undermines the "one country, two systems" framework, the National Security Law fully and faithfully implements the principles of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and a high degree of autonomy. It clearly stipulates four types of offences endangering national security and the penalties. Law-abiding people will not unwittingly violate the law. At the same time, the National Security Law contains specific provisions upholding Hong Kong people's rights and freedoms under the Basic Law as well as the relevant provisions of international covenants on human rights as applied to Hong Kong. The Law also provides for the presumption of innocence, the prohibition of double jeopardy, and the right to defend oneself and other rights in judicial proceedings that a criminal suspect, defendant and other parties in judicial proceedings are entitled to under the law.

The National Security Law is in no violation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration. As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has stressed time and again, the Sino-British Joint Declaration stipulated the resumption of the exercise of sovereignty by China over Hong Kong and relevant arrangements during the transition period. The basic policies regarding Hong Kong declared by China in the Joint Declaration were China's statement of policies, not commitment to the United Kingdom (UK) or an international obligation as some claim. With the resumption of the exercise of sovereignty by China over Hong Kong and the completion of follow-up matters, all UK-related provisions have been fulfilled. The international community should fully acknowledge this fact and stop interfering in Hong Kong affairs which are internal affairs of China.

The rule of law in Hong Kong has a strong basis. The HKSAR Government is appalled by the call contained in the "resolution" that suspects arrested by law enforcement agencies in the HKSAR, some already convicted by independent courts, should be immediately released, apparently suggesting that people with certain political beliefs should be immune to legal sanctions. Nobody is above the law. Anybody who contravenes the law will have to face justice, regardless of who or where he/she is, as long as the offence falls within Hong Kong's jurisdiction.

The HKSAR Government will not tolerate any offence of subversion. Those who organised, planned, committed or participated in subversion would be pursued for their criminal act in accordance with the National Security Law.

Officers of the HKSAR Government are discharging an honourable duty to prevent, stop and punish in accordance with the law acts and activities endangering national security. Hong Kong officials' determination in safeguarding national security will not be affected in any way by any so-called "sanctions".

Prince of Wales Hospital announces patient care assistant tests preliminarily positive for COVID-19

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Prince of Wales Hospital (PWH) made the following announcement today (January 22) regarding a patient care assistant (PCA) who has tested preliminarily positive for COVID-19:

A PCA of the hospital Staff Clinic developed a fever on January 20 and attended the Staff Clinic on the next day (January 21). She was arranged to undergo a deep throat saliva test, and the preliminarily test result available on the same day was positive for COVID-19. She has been arranged for admission to the Community Treatment Facility.

Upon learning of the test result, the hospital infection control team conducted contact tracing. It was noted that the last duty day of the PCA was January 20. She had been wearing appropriate personal protective equipment during work and no patient was identified as a close contact. Three staff members with whom she had meals together were identified as close contacts and they will be quarantined. It was also understood that the PCA had attended a staff training at Shatin Hospital on January 19 and all training participants had been wearing surgical masks. As a precautionary measure, the hospital will arrange COVID-19 tests for other participants of the training and for staff working at the Staff Clinic.

The Staff Clinic was temporarily closed for thorough cleaning and disinfection this morning. Clinic staff had contacted the patients to cancel their appointments. The hospital will continue to closely monitor the health condition of staff and patients, and communicate with the Centre for Health Protection on the latest progress.

Meetings of Legislative Council and its Committees

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

Details of the meetings of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and its

Committees to be held in the LegCo Complex during the week from January 25 to 29 are available in the meeting schedule attached.

The information in the meeting schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the LegCo Calendar on the LegCo Website (www.legco.gov.hk) for the latest details of meetings.

Members of the public can watch or listen to the meetings, including meetings conducted by videoconferencing, via the Webcast system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meetings which are not conducted by videoconferencing at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.

Red tides sighted

Four red tides have been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (January 22).

Staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department spotted the first red tide on January 18 at Deep Water Bay Beach, Hong Kong Island, and the second and third red tides on January 19 at South Bay Beach and Repulse Bay Beach respectively. The fourth red tide was spotted by staff of the Marine Department on January 20 in waters off Wan Poon Path, Junk Bay.

Apart from the red tide at South Bay Beach, which dissipated, the other three red tides still persist. No fish deaths associated with the four mentioned red tides have been reported as at today.

A spokesman for the working group said, "All four red tides were formed by *Phaeocystis globosa*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters. According to overseas literature, *Phaeocystis globosa* can produce foam that may cause harmful effects to fish."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at the Lo Tik Wan, Sok Kwu Wan and Tung Lung Chau fish culture zones to monitor the situation closely and increase aeration where necessary.

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The AFCD's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue to monitor red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.