

## Red flags hoisted at Pui O Beach and Hap Mun Bay Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (June 26) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Pui O Beach in Islands District and Hap Mun Bay Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

---

## Appointments to Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development

The Government announced today (June 26) that the Chief Executive has re-appointed 35 non-official members and four ex-officio members to the Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development (the Council) for a term of two years with effect from July 1, 2020.

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, said, "Since its establishment in 2018, members of the Council are among my most trusted advisers on matters relating to Hong Kong's strategic positioning and future direction of economic development. With their strong business network and unwavering commitment to Hong Kong, I look forward to their valuable contributions in the new term particularly in the Government's efforts to re-launch Hong Kong's economy."

The membership of the Council is as follows:

Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_

Chief Executive

Non-official Members

\_\_\_\_\_

Professor John Chai Yat-chiu

Mr Bernard Charnwut Chan

Professor Daniel Cheng Man-chung

Mr Edward Cheng Wai-sun  
Dr Jonathan Choi Koon-shum  
Mr Henry Fan Hung-ling  
Dr Fu Yuning  
Dr Victor Fung Kwok-king  
Mr Stuart Thomson Gulliver  
Mr Benjamin Hung Pi-cheng  
Mr Jimmy Lai Chi-ming  
Mr Lau Ming-wai  
Dr Donald Li Kwok-tung  
Mr Brian David Li Man-bun  
Mr Victor Li Tzar-kuoi  
Professor Frederick Ma Si-hang  
Professor Mak Tak-wah  
Mr Joseph Luc Ngai  
Mr Anthony John Liddell Nightingale  
Mr Neil Shen Nanpeng  
Dr Harry Shum  
Mr John Robert Slosar  
Mr Jack So Chak-kwong  
Ms Winnie Tam Wan-chi, SC  
Mr Henry Tang Ying-yen  
Professor Tsui Lap-chee  
Mr Andrew Tung Lieh-cheung  
Mr Wong Siu-kong  
Dr Wong Yau-kar  
Mr Peter Woo Kwong-ching  
Professor Anthony Wu Ting-yuk  
Ms Marjorie Yang Mun-tak  
Professor Eric Yim Chi-ming  
Dr Allan Zeman  
Mr John Zhao

#### Ex-officio Members

---

Chief Secretary for Administration  
Financial Secretary  
Secretary for Justice  
Director, Chief Executive's Office

The Council is a high-level body to advise the Chief Executive on Hong Kong's future development and strategies for driving innovation. It gives advice on Hong Kong's strategic positioning in the global and regional contexts and directions of economic development with an aim of enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness and growth potential, provides guidance on evidence-based research and studies on related issues with a view to enhancing policy formulation to meet changing development needs, and advises on stakeholder engagement and public participation in the policy formulation and consensus building process.

---

## Government strongly objects to United States Trafficking in Persons Report 2020

A Government spokesman said today (June 26) that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government strongly objects to the United States Trafficking in Persons Report 2020 (the Report) released by the United States Department of State.

The spokesman said, "The Report contains allegations made by unidentified sources and without specific case details. It is disappointing to note that much of the analysis in the Report appears to be based merely on hearsay. The findings are groundless, and the rating of Hong Kong at Tier-2 Watch List is obviously seriously biased and not substantiated by facts. The HKSAR Government firmly rejects the findings and rating on such a sloppy and prejudiced basis. As a matter of fact, the HKSAR Government attaches great importance to combatting trafficking-in-persons (TIP)."

"Indeed, Hong Kong has all along been making proactive, all-out and multi-pronged efforts to combat TIP. The Action Plan to Tackle TIP and to Enhance Protection of Foreign Domestic Helpers in Hong Kong (the Action Plan) and our continuous efforts in the past two years formed a solid foundation. Our resolve to combat TIP is beyond doubt, regardless of any one-sided and biased views on our solid work," the spokesman added.

In 2019, over 7 500 initial TIP victim screenings were conducted by various departments concerned, including the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF), the Immigration Department (ImmD), the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) and the Labour Department (LD). Screening questions used by various departments are akin to the ones proposed by advocating non-government organisations. Definition of TIP adopted is the same as the one set out in the Palermo Protocol (although it has never been applied to Hong Kong). Despite such proactive and intensified screening efforts, only three persons were identified as TIP victims (i.e. 0.04 per cent of all screening conducted).

"The small number and percentage of victims identified reinforces our observation all along that TIP has never been a prevalent problem in Hong Kong. There has never been any sign that Hong Kong is being actively used by syndicates as a destination or transit point for TIP. It is irresponsible to call it otherwise without presenting any solid evidence, making the Report just a bare assertion. To attack Hong Kong for lagging behind in our anti-TIP efforts despite such positive outcome is grossly unfair and illogical," the spokesman said.

In March 2018, the HKSAR Government went an extra mile in setting up a

high-level inter-bureau/departmental Steering Committee, chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, and with the Secretary for Security and the Secretary for Labour and Welfare as Vice Chairmen, to provide high-level policy steer on actions against TIP. The Steering Committee swiftly promulgated the Action Plan, comprising 14 new and 20 on-going measures on victim identification, investigation, enforcement, prosecution, victim protection and support, prevention and partnership building with different stakeholders.

In 2019, the Government pressed ahead with its anti-TIP efforts in full gear. By end-2019, the Action Plan was fully implemented, with all initiatives firmly in place.

"To support the implementation of the Action Plan, the Government has, since the 2019-20 financial year, provided recurrent funding amounting to \$62 million annually to create 98 new posts in the HKPF, ImmD, C&ED, LD and the Department of Justice (DoJ).

"One of the new initiatives implemented in 2019 was LD's initial victim screening mechanism at the 10 branch offices of its Labour Relations Division across Hong Kong since mid-December 2019. This has further enhanced the protection for foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) as those potentially being exploited or abused could be identified at an early stage. Accordingly, those who might possibly be facing greater dangers (e.g. being physically abused) could be identified as early as possible and be referred to law enforcement agencies for conducting full debriefing and follow-up investigations. Since the implementation of the initial victim screening mechanism and as at end-May 2020, 742 initial screenings had been conducted. No TIP victim was identified," the spokesman said.

In 2019, LD continued to take rigorous enforcement action against employment agencies (EAs) in breach of the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57) (EO), the Employment Agency Regulations (Cap. 57A) (EAR) and the Code of Practice for EAs (CoP). LD conducted about 2 000 regular and surprise inspections of EAs annually to ensure that EAs operate in compliance with EO, EAR and CoP. Prompt investigation would be initiated upon receiving any complaints from job-seekers or employers. LD also set up a new dedicated team in its Employment Agencies Administration to strengthen the enforcement of the Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 2018.

In 2019, LD successfully prosecuted 10 EAs under EO, of which four were prosecuted for overcharging job-seekers, two for unlicensed operation and four for other offences. The licences of 13 EAs were revoked or refused to be issued/renewed, which was an 18 per cent increase as compared with year 2018. The grounds for revoking or refusing to issue/renew these licences include, among others, involvement in the financial affairs of job-seekers, retention of passports without consent, violation of other CoP requirements, etc. The above demonstrates the effectiveness of the enforcement actions taken against EAs.

In parallel, ImmD also set up a new dedicated team in December 2019 to step up the checking of all FDH visa applications, as well as to conduct

criminal investigations into TIP-related offences in relation to immigration matters arising from such applications, with a view to taking a more proactive approach in identifying FDHs potentially being exploited and increasing the chance of victims being identified. As at end-May 2020, a total of 944 cases were screened under the TIP victim screenings mechanism by the new dedicated team of ImmD. No victim was identified.

As regards prosecution, as a general guiding principle, our prosecutors are mandated to give due consideration to any TIP elements that may feature in any given case when deciding whether prosecution should be instigated or continued. In appropriate cases, a witness may be granted immunity from prosecution, having regard to the established legal principles and the guidelines under the Prosecution Code. Over the past years, DoJ has granted immunities to suspected TIP victims and exploited FDHs in various cases to facilitate them to testify against their perpetrators in court.

TIP is a heinous crime that has never been tolerated in Hong Kong. Hong Kong has a long and well-established legal framework. There are over 50 legal provisions against various TIP conducts that form a comprehensive package of safeguards comparable to composite TIP laws found in other jurisdictions. Some of the offences attract penalty of up to life imprisonment.

"Our intensified efforts and notable improvements achieved in recent years, including dedicated efforts both in policy steer and frontline enforcement, significant expansion of victim screening coverage and investment of substantial new resources, should have been duly recognised. To persistently attack our multi-legislation approach, which has proved to be effective, insisting that Hong Kong must introduce a composite TIP law, is most unreasonable and inconceivable. Ignoring our efforts and achievements solely because we adopt a multi-legislation approach to tackle TIP seriously calls into question the credibility and objectivity of the Report," the spokesman said.

The spokesman stressed, "The HKSAR Government will continue to foster a constructive partnership with the civil society in combating TIP on all fronts. Hard facts and evidence have clearly confirmed that TIP has never been a prevalent problem in Hong Kong."

---

## **[Press release on public hospital daily update on COVID-19 cases](#)**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (June 25), two COVID-19 confirmed patients (case numbers: 338 and 1097) were discharged from hospital in the past 24 hours. So far, a total of 1 088 patients with confirmed or probable infections have

been discharged.

At present, there are 610 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 194 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 85 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in nine hospitals, among which one patient is in critical condition (case number: 595), and the remaining 84 patients are in stable condition.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

---

## **CHP investigates 14 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has announced that as of 4pm today (June 25), the CHP was investigating 14 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 1 194 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 1 193 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases announced today involve nine males and five females aged between two and 39. All of them had travel history during the incubation period. The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex.

The CHP again urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives to minimise the risk of infection. In particular, they should go out less and avoid social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings to reduce the chance of contacting infected persons who may not present any symptoms, and minimise the risk of outbreak clusters emerging in the community.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially

before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link [wa.me/85296171823?text=hi](https://wa.me/85296171823?text=hi), they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.