

## Police urge the public not to take part in unauthorised assemblies

Police are aware that someone has been calling on members of the public to take part in an unauthorised assembly under the pretext of religious gathering on Hong Kong Island on June 12 (Friday). According to Schedule One of the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation, gatherings during a religious activity are exempted only if they are held at any premises constructed or regularly used as a place of worship. Thus, not all religious activities are exempted.

Police reiterate that anyone participating in such events may be found guilty of "taking part in an unauthorised assembly" under the Public Order Ordinance and be liable to a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment. Besides, engaging in public gatherings will also increase the risk of transmission of virus in the community and may violate the prohibition of group gatherings under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation.

Police stress that any group gatherings taking place during the ongoing pandemic can also increase the risk of spreading the virus. Police call upon members of the public to refrain from taking part in unauthorised assemblies and prohibited group gatherings. Police will deploy adequate manpower in relevant locations on the day and take resolute action to enforce the law, including making arrests.

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## Illegal worker jailed

An Indian illegal worker holding a recognisance form was jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (June 9).

During operation "Greenlane" conducted on March 10, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided a garbage collection depot in Tsuen Wan. A male Indian, aged 47, was arrested while working as a garbage worker. Upon identity checking, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was also arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in

force. He pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD 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.

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 the 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 threats 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 intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

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## [Hung Shing Yeh Beach reopened](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular

intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department said today (June 10) that the red flag at Hung Shing Yeh Beach in Islands District has been reopened. The beach was closed earlier on after an oil spill was found.

However, due to big waves, the red flag is still hoisted at the beach. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

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## **Police arrest 53 persons in Central**

A large group of protestors gathered in Central last night (June 9). They blocked roads repeatedly and behaved in a disorderly manner. At around 6pm yesterday, protestors started to gather in Chater Garden. They then occupied the carriageways on Des Voeux Road and Ice House Street and built barricades with miscellaneous objects, paralyzing the traffic. Police took dispersal action and directed protestors to leave the carriageways. However, some protestors ignored Police warnings and blocked roads again. Police conducted dispersal operation and deployed minimum necessary force including using pepper ball gun and pepper spray to stop the unlawful behaviour.

As at small hours of today (June 10), Police had arrested 53 persons, including 36 males and 17 females, in Central for offences including unlawful assembly and participating in unauthorised assembly etc.

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## **Eighth meeting of Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development held**

The Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development (the Council) held its eighth meeting today (June 9). Members were briefed on developments in the past few months, including the Government's efforts in fighting against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and its impact on Hong Kong's economy, and the recent Decision of the National People's Congress (NPC) on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to safeguard national security. Members also deliberated on

the directions and strategies to re-launch Hong Kong's economy.

At the meeting, Members unanimously commended the HKSAR Government for successfully containing the pandemic as reflected in the low number of confirmed cases and deaths. They noted the "suppress and lift" strategy adopted by the Government and that unlike other places, Hong Kong had not gone through a stage of complete city lockdown. While appreciating that the various border control measures and social distancing restrictions were being adjusted based on public health concerns and taking into account the advice of experts, their impact on the economy was significant. They suggested that bigger efforts should be made towards gradual resumption of normal operations especially for travel in and out of the Mainland to meet genuine social and business needs. Several Members offered advice on how COVID-19 testing capacity could be ramped up to meet the demands for both disease surveillance and essential travel purposes.

Members noted and welcomed the relief measures, particularly the Employment Support Scheme, rolled out by the Government totaling \$290 billion (around 10 per cent of GDP). Members also provided advice on how the Government should engage the local and overseas businesses in re-launching Hong Kong's economy and proposed that opportunities available from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations should be seized.

Mrs Lam also briefed members on the NPC's Decision to enact legislation for the HKSAR to safeguard national security. She said that some overseas governments' criticisms of the proposed legislative exercise were totally misplaced and any threats of sanctions were absolutely unjustified. Members noted that safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests is the constitutional duty of the HKSAR. They supported the enactment of national security legislation to restore stability in Hong Kong and hoped that the new legislation to be promulgated for application in Hong Kong would provide clarity and certainty. Members also urged that more effective publicity should be done internationally to address misperceptions and concerns.

"Despite the severe setback that Hong Kong has experienced in the past year, I remain confident of our city's future because of our strategic positioning in accessing the Mainland economy, continued support from the Central Authorities and the resilience of Hong Kong people," Mrs Lam said.