

Approved Central District Outline Zoning Plan referred back for amendment

The Town Planning Board announced today (May 10) that the Chief Executive in Council has referred the approved Central District Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) to the Board for amendment to reflect the latest land use proposals.

The OZP incorporating the respective amendments will be exhibited for public inspection under the provisions of the Town Planning Ordinance.

The Central District OZP was last approved by the Chief Executive in Council in November 2016.

Hospital Authority submits limited registration applications

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (May 10) submitted to the Medical Council of Hong Kong (MCHK) the applications of seven non-locally trained doctors for limited registration to serve in public hospitals. Of the seven applications, five are new applications and the other two are for renewal.

The HA spokesperson said public hospitals have been facing doctor manpower shortage and workload issues in various clinical units. The recruitment of non-locally trained doctors has been supported by the respective Co-ordinating Committees and endorsed by the HA Task Force on Limited Registration Scheme.

The five new applications for limited registration submitted to the MCHK today cover the specialties of Family Medicine, Neurosurgery, Paediatrics and Radiology. Regarding the renewal applications for two non-locally trained doctors (one in Emergency Medicine and one in Family Medicine), their current limited registration will expire in the third quarter of 2019.

The overseas recruitment of non-locally trained doctors will continue. At the moment, there are 14 non-locally trained doctors who have been assessed to be eligible for the recruitment exercise and considered suitable for appointment after interviews by user departments. All the applicants have fulfilled related qualification requirements recognised by the constituent

Colleges of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, and they all have licenses to practise in their respective countries. The HA will submit limited registration applications for non-locally trained doctors in batches according to their intended dates of reporting for duty.

Currently, there are 12 non-locally trained doctors working in public hospitals under limited registration to relieve manpower shortage and workload pressure of front-line doctors in the specialties of Anaesthesia, Cardiothoracic Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine and Radiology.

Since April this year, the HA has expanded the scope of the limited registration recruitment scheme to all specialties at the rank of Service Resident, and to recruit non-locally trained specialists at the rank of Associate Consultant in eight specialties (Anaesthesia, Anatomical Pathology, Cardiothoracic Surgery, Otorhinolaryngology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Ophthalmology, Radiology and Nuclear Medicine) which face significant shortage of specialists.

[Update on latest MERS situation in Saudi Arabia](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 10) closely monitoring 36 additional cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) from March 1 to April 8. The CHP again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they visit.

According to the WHO, of the 36 additional cases, 28 were male patients and eight were female patients, with ages from 22 to 80. Among them, nine had exposure to camels and consumed camel milk, 12 had contact with previously confirmed patients, five were health care workers. Twenty-four had underlying illnesses and 12 have passed away.

According to the latest information, 2 419 cases have been reported to the WHO (with 836 deaths), including 2 200 in 10 Middle East countries comprising 2 028 in the KSA, 87 in the United Arab Emirates, 28 in Jordan, 24 in Oman, 19 in Qatar, six in Iran, four in Kuwait, two in Lebanon, and one each in Yemen and Bahrain.

"We will maintain close communication with the WHO and relevant health authorities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"As countries in the Middle East, particularly the KSA, continue to report MERS cases from time to time, travellers should refrain from going to

farms, barns or markets with camels and avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry. Most of the cases reported in the Middle East had history of exposure to camels, consumption of camel milk or contact with other MERS patients," the spokesman said.

"Scientific evidence showed that camels are reservoirs for MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV). Camels infected with MERS-CoV may not show any signs of infection. Infected animals may shed MERS-CoV through nasal and eye discharge, faeces, and potentially in their milk and urine. The virus may also be found in the raw organs and meat of infected animals. Therefore, the best protection is to practise good hygiene and avoid direct contact with all of these," the spokesman added.

From time to time, suspected MERS cases reported to the CHP for investigation involved patients with history of contact with camels in the Middle East. The CHP strongly advises travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS-CoV.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS page of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), MERS statistics in [affected areas](#), the CHP's [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the WHO's [latest news](#) for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's [health advice on MERS](#).

[Effective Exchange Rate Index](#)

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, May 10, 2019 is 104.4(down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

[Fourteen immigration offenders arrested](#)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a territory-wide anti-illegal worker operation codenamed "Twilight" from May 6 to 9. A total of 11 illegal workers and three suspected employers were arrested.

During the operation, ImmD Task Force officers raided 29 target locations including a bar, a commercial building, a park, restaurants and sport centres. Eleven illegal workers and three employers were arrested. The illegal workers comprised six men and five women, aged 25 to 55. Among them, one woman was a holder of a recognisance form, which prohibits her from taking any employment. Furthermore, one woman was suspected of using and being in possession of a forged Hong Kong identity card. Meanwhile, one man and two women, aged 37 to 55, 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 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 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.