

Report on the prohibition of the operation of the “Hong Kong National Party” submitted by the CE to the CPG

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (April 18) released to the public the report she submitted to the Central People's Government (CPG) on the prohibition of the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government in accordance with the law and related circumstances.

The CPG issued a letter to the Chief Executive on February 26, 2019, in support of the HKSAR Government's action to prohibit the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" in accordance with the law. The letter reiterates that in accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law, the HKSAR has the constitutional responsibility to safeguard national security in accordance with the law. It is the duty of the HKSAR Government, and the shared obligation of all Chinese people, including the compatriots in Hong Kong, to safeguard the sovereignty and unity as well as territorial integrity of the country. The CPG requested the Chief Executive to submit a report to the CPG regarding the prohibition of the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" in accordance with the law and related circumstances.

The Chief Executive submitted the report on the prohibition of the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" and related circumstances to the CPG on April 16, 2019. Content of the report includes the case background and summary of the process, etc. Upon the advice of the Department of Justice, in order to avoid affecting any possible legal proceedings in future, the report released to the public today contains the main body of the report (see the English translation attached).

Successful prosecution against shipping company that illegally dumped substances into sea by EPD following public report

Join Art Investment Limited was convicted and fined \$8,000 at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (April 18) for contravening the Dumping at Sea Ordinance (DASO) as a result of illegal marine dumping by a staff member of

the company's vessel.

An EPD spokesperson said the department received a report in October last year from a member of the public who witnessed someone on a vessel docked near Sam Ka Tsuen Ferry Pier at Yau Tong in Kowloon repeatedly shovelling substances into the sea. That member of the public also provided the EPD with a video recorded on a mobile phone for the department's follow-up. After investigation, the EPD found that on the day of the incident the vessel of Join Art Investment Limited carried out maintenance and cleaning at that location, and its staff dumped substances into the sea. The department hence instituted prosecution against the company concerned in accordance with the DASO.

It is an offence for anyone to illegally dump substances or waste at sea and such illegal activity will pollute the marine environment. The spokesman reminded those responsible for marine works and marine transportation that they must properly dispose of all dismantled materials and waste generated from works. They must also properly train and manage their staff, so that they will not dump substances or waste at sea and contravene the law. According to the DASO, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The spokesman urged members of the public to make a report to the EPD if they witness any person suspected of dumping waste from a vessel.

More information about the control of marine dumping is available on the EPD's website:

www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide_ref/daso_gr.html.

Red tide sighted

A red tide has been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (April 18).

The first red tide was spotted by staff of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) yesterday (April 17) at Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma Island.

The red tide still persists. No associated death of fish has been reported.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The red tide was formed by *Noctiluca scintillans*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters and is non-toxic."

The AFCD urged mariculturists at Lo Tik Wan and Sok Kwu Wan 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 monitoring red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.

FEHD orders restaurant in Tsuen Wan to suspend business for 14 days

The Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene has ordered a restaurant in Tsuen Wan to suspend business for 14 days as the operator repeatedly breached the Food Business Regulation (FBR) by extending the business area illegally.

The restaurant, located on the ground floor at 17 Tso Kung Square, Tsuen Wan, was ordered to suspend business from today (April 18) to May 1.

"In July last year and February this year, two convictions for the above-mentioned breach were recorded against the restaurant. A total fine of \$7,000 was levied by the court and 30 demerit points were registered against the licensee under the department's demerit points system. The contraventions resulted in the 14-day licence suspension," a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said.

The licensee of the restaurant had a record of two convictions for the same offence in March and April last year. A total fine of \$5,000 was levied and 30 demerit points were registered. The breaches led to licence suspension for seven days in July last year.

The spokesman reminded licensees of food premises to comply with the FBR, or their licences could be suspended or cancelled.

Licensed food premises are required to exhibit a sign, at a conspicuous place near the main entrance, indicating that the premises has been licensed. A list of licensed food premises is available on the FEHD's website (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/index.html).

Exemption of waiver fee, rent and

associated costs for land applications related to provision of transitional housing

The Government announced today (April 18) that the Chief Executive (CE) in Council had approved the exemption of waiver fee, rent and associated costs for land applications related to the provision of transitional housing, with a view to facilitating more community initiated transitional housing projects to alleviate the hardship faced by families awaiting public rental housing or living in inadequate housing.

According to prevailing policy, if non-profit-making organisations or social enterprises (collectively termed as NGOs) plan to utilise private non-residential sites or buildings for provision of transitional housing, the owners should submit waiver applications to the Lands Department for a temporary permit to use the sites or buildings for residential purposes and pay the waiver fees and associated costs if residential use is not permitted in the leases. Additionally, if the NGOs plan to use vacant government sites or premises for provision of transitional housing, they also need to apply to the Lands Department for Short Term Tenancy and pay the rents and associated costs. A spokesman of Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) said that the facilitating measure would lessen the financial burden of NGOs.

The spokesman pointed out that if NGOs plan to provide transitional housing projects, they are required to seek policy support from the THB, and sign an agreement with the Bureau on operational details, including rental arrangement, management and service responsibilities, as well as the exit arrangement at the end of the project. This is a prerequisite for the Lands Department to consider exempting the fees and associated costs and to ensure that the rent is affordable to tenants and the project is self-financing as far as possible.

So far, the transitional housing projects initiated by the community have provided over 600 units for needy families. Most of the units comply with the permitted land use and no application to the Lands Department is required. Subsequent to the CE's announcement in June 2018 on transitional housing, the Government has endeavoured to facilitate NGOs to utilise vacant government sites and buildings, and the conversion of private non-residential sites and buildings, to take forward more transitional housing projects.

Since late 2018, the Government has taken various measures to facilitate the launching of transitional housing projects. These include (i) the pragmatic approach adopted by the Buildings Department in granting modification or exemption under the Buildings Ordinance for submissions in old domestic buildings and wholesale-converted Industrial Buildings (IBs) with genuine planning and design constraints; (ii) the Town Planning Board's agreement to treat transitional housing projects in permanent buildings for

five years or less, including wholesale-converted IBs in designated zones in the urban and new town areas, as a temporary use always permitted under the relevant Outline Zoning Plans; and (iii) the exemption of waiver fees for not-for-profit transitional housing projects in wholesale-converted IBs. In addition, the Financial Secretary also announced on February 27 this year that another \$2 billion would be set aside to support transitional housing projects.