

Red flags hoisted at Stanley Main Beach and Big Wave 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 (March 26) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Stanley Main Beach and Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Members of public invited to Hospital Authority Board Meeting

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Members of the public are invited to attend the Hospital Authority (HA) Board Meeting to be held on March 28 (Thursday) at 3.30pm.

The HA Board Meeting has been open to members of the public since 1998 to demonstrate the continuous effort of the Authority to enhance its transparency and public accountability. The HA Board holds meetings at regular intervals to discuss major health policy issues which have an impact on the public.

Through these open meetings, the community is able to understand more about the role and functions of the HA Board as well as the operation and services of the HA and its hospitals.

The HA Board will discuss the following agenda items in the coming meeting:

- Hospital Authority Annual Plan 2019-20;
- Progress Update on Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine Pilot Programme;
- Chief Executive's Progress Report on Strategic Priorities; and
- Cluster Presentation Programme – New Territories East Cluster Joint Replacement Centre.

The meeting agenda and papers will be made available to the public at the meeting. Members of the public are reminded that they can attend the Board Meeting only as observers and will not be participating in the meeting discussions.

Members of the public who are interested in attending the coming Board Meeting have to make advance booking by contacting the Secretariat of the HA Board at 2300 6797 during office hours. To facilitate booking arrangement, members of the public are advised to provide their name and contact telephone number. In view of the limited seating available in the Public Gallery of the meeting venue, seating will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis.

SCED: Hong Kong and Australia building stronger bilateral economic relationship with free trade and investment agreements signed (with photos)

The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and Investment Agreement signed between Hong Kong and Australia today (March 26) provide a new platform for the two sides to meet and review trade and investment initiatives with a view to promoting deeper and broader economic integration, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said at a luncheon seminar in Sydney, Australia.

The two Agreements covering trade in goods, trade in services, investment and other related areas not only offer zero tariffs for Hong Kong products, but also provide legal certainty and better access to the Australian market to Hong Kong business people, thereby bringing the bilateral trade and investment relationship between the two economies to new heights, he said.

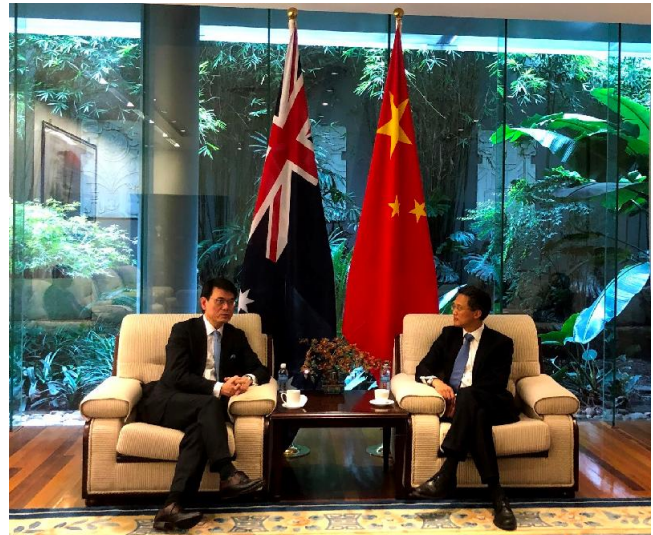
"With these two agreements in place, I encourage Australian enterprises to invest more in Hong Kong. Being one of the world's freest economies buttressed by the rule of law and an independent judiciary, Hong Kong has many core strengths that have stood the test of time. Among them are a simple and low tax regime, high-quality services, a skilled and talented workforce with global vision, and free flow of information and capital," he continued.

He stressed that Hong Kong will continue to make full use of its unique status conferred by the Basic Law and the principle of "one country, two

systems" to expand its FTA network, with a view to achieving deeper economic integration with different parts of the world.

During his stay in Sydney to sign the Agreements with the Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Mr Simon Birmingham, Mr Yau took the opportunity yesterday (March 25) to visit Destination NSW, where he was briefed on the latest tourism developments in New South Wales and its promotional strategies for various flagship events. He also paid a courtesy call on the Chinese Consul General in Sydney, Mr Gu Xiaojie.

Mr Yau will return to Hong Kong this evening.



[Labour Department to hold occupational health public talks](#)

The Labour Department (LD) will hold a public talk entitled "Occupational health of office workers series (III): More exercise, smart work" on April 2 (Tuesday). During the talk, the LD's occupational health nurse will introduce the benefits of exercise, with demonstration and practice of workplace exercise. The talk will be held at 3pm in Activity Room

1, G/F, Hong Kong Central Library, 66 Causeway Road, Causeway Bay.

The LD will hold another talk entitled "Noise hazards and prevention of hearing loss" on April 8 (Monday) on the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Noise at Work) Regulation and the Occupational Deafness Compensation Scheme. Given by the LD's occupational hygienist and occupational health nurse, and a representative from the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board, the talk will also cover the health hazards caused by noise at work and measures for preventing hearing loss. It will be held at 3pm in the Lecture Hall, Hong Kong Space Museum, 10 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui.

Both talks will be conducted in Cantonese. Admission is free. For enquiries or registration, please call 2852 4040.

EDB announces arrangements for implementing "all-graduate teaching force" policy in aided and caput schools

The Education Bureau (EDB) issued a circular today (March 26) to all aided schools (including special schools) and caput schools to announce the implementation details of the "all-graduate teaching force" policy.

The Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, said, "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region attaches great importance to education and hopes to provide a stable, caring, inspiring and satisfying learning and teaching environment to students and teachers. We are committed to providing support to teachers and raising their professional status. Through the implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy, we not only recognise the contributions of those teachers with a bachelor's degree, but also hope to facilitate teachers' professional development and raise their professional roles and functions to further improve the quality of education.

"In the past two years, the current-term Government has allocated an additional \$8.3 billion in recurrent new resources for the education sector. Considerable resources have been used to increase teaching manpower and provide support to teachers' work, which include increasing the teacher-to-class ratio for primary and secondary schools by 0.1 across the board, creating the Special Educational Needs Coordinator post and other regular teaching posts, and increasing manpower for professional support, such as information technology assistants, executive officers, social

workers, educational psychologists and speech therapists, so that teachers can concentrate more on teaching. In addition, we have been striving to retain surplus teachers when there were fluctuations of student-age population, maintaining a stable school environment."

Mr Yeung added, "While we will continue to enhance our support to teachers at the policy level, we hope that the school sponsoring bodies, incorporated management committees, parent-teacher associations and other stakeholders can respect and support teachers' front-line work at the school level, and thereby together we could nurture students to grow up healthily."

The EDB will implement the all-graduate teaching force policy in public sector primary and secondary schools in one go in the 2019/20 school year. In this regard, the respective ratio of graduate teacher posts in public sector primary schools and secondary schools will be increased from the current 65 per cent and 85 per cent across the board to 100 per cent. All teaching posts on the approved establishment of public sector schools will be graduate teacher posts. Aided schools may, taking into account their school-based circumstances, achieve full implementation of the policy in one go or in two years. The new measure will incur an additional annual expenditure of around \$1.5 billion.

To cater for different school circumstances and needs, and to allow sufficient time for schools to arrange duties and hence ensure a smooth transition, aided schools may, in light of their own circumstances, fully implement the all-graduate teaching force policy in one go or in stages by the 2020/21 school year. Schools should establish a school-based mechanism to allow all serving non-graduate teachers holding a local bachelor's degree (or equivalent) who are willing to shoulder the duties of graduate teachers to be regraded as graduate teachers. Moreover, newly joined regular teachers appointed within the approved establishment from the 2019/20 school year onwards should possess a local bachelor's degree (or equivalent) and satisfy all the entry requirements and standing conditions set out for graduate teachers in the Codes of Aid.

With the implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy, all graduate teachers are required to support school development and cater for students' needs by shouldering more diversified professional duties, such as co-ordinating tasks in the areas of student support, learning and teaching, curriculum development or teacher professional development, so that teachers' professional capacity could be realised.

Aided schools should encourage serving non-graduate teachers whose current qualifications cannot meet the requirement for regrading to attain the recognised qualifications as early as possible, so that they may be regraded as graduate teachers for better career and promotion prospects. For serving non-graduate teachers without a recognised degree, or those who choose not to be regraded as graduate teachers of their own accord, they may be accommodated in the current posts in their serving aided schools.

Caput schools should make necessary arrangements to achieve full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy by the 2020/21

school year.

The EDB set up the Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers in November 2017 to review and further promote teachers' professional development, which includes the drawing up of a timetable for establishing an all-graduate teaching force. The Task Force has also proposed a direction for the purpose of extensive consultation on relevant issues. In the course of consultation, stakeholders unanimously called for the early and full implementation of the all-graduate teaching force policy to further raise the professional status of teachers and retain and attract talents. In view of this, the Government accepted the recommendation of the Task Force and the Chief Executive announced the initiative of the all-graduate teaching force policy in public sector primary and secondary schools in her 2018 Policy Address.