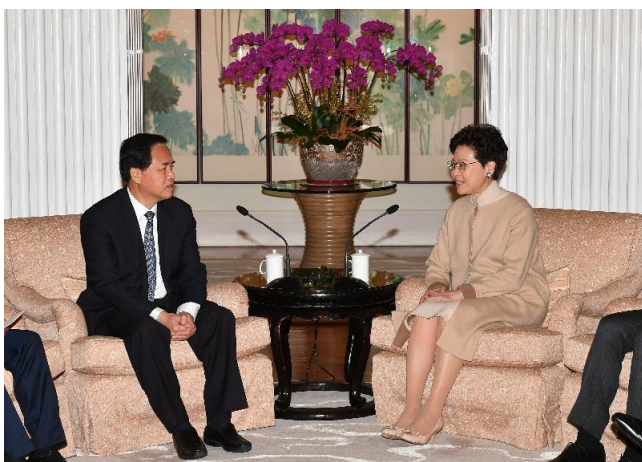


CE meets Secretary of CPC Hainan Provincial Committee (with photo)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, met the Secretary of the CPC Hainan Provincial Committee, Mr Liu Cigui, at Government House this afternoon (February 26). The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, and the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, were also present.

Mrs Lam welcomed Mr Liu's visit to Hong Kong with his delegation and she said she was pleased to meet with Mr Liu again following her visit to Hainan to attend the Boao Forum for Asia in April last year. She said that a number of areas for co-operation were explored at the last meeting and the potential for co-operation in tourism was particularly remarkable. She wished Mr Liu a fruitful visit to Hong Kong, further enhancing co-operation between the two places in other areas.

Mrs Lam said that the Central Government earlier promulgated the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, which brings huge development opportunities to Hong Kong, and that taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area will be a major part of the work of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. She said that the development of the Greater Bay Area and the China (Hainan) Pilot Free Trade Zone which was approved by the State Council last year will bring new co-operation opportunities for Hainan and Hong Kong. She welcomed Hainan to actively introduce to Hong Kong business and professional services sectors the latest developments of the Hainan free trade zone and encouraged Hainan enterprises to leverage Hong Kong's advantages in finance, trade, logistics, management and professional services to explore global markets.



CSD issues statement regarding treatment of persons in custody

In response to allegations lodged by Legislative Council members Mr Shiu Ka-chun and Dr Fernando Cheung and a discharged person in custody against the disciplinary action that the person in custody had received during his incarceration, the Correctional Services Department (CSD) issued the following statement today (February 26):

The CSD ensures a safe and secure custodial environment for persons in custody by committing to maintaining order and discipline in penal institutions. Therefore, any indiscipline by persons in custody will not be tolerated. When such behaviour is found, the institutional management will commence investigation into the matter in accordance with the law. Should there be a prima facie case, disciplinary action will be taken against the person in custody concerned. During the hearing, the Adjudicating Officer will hear all the evidence cited for the charge, and the accused person in custody has the right to clarify the evidence, cross-examine the reporting officer and any witnesses, make the defence, summon witnesses and submit evidence. Should the Adjudicating Officer find the accused person in custody guilty, punishment will be handed out according to Rule 63 of the Prison Rules.

The person in custody concerned may appeal to the Commissioner of Correctional Services against the ruling and punishment. The CSD has clear instructions and mechanisms for handling the appeal. The CSD is committed to ensuring all appeal cases are handled in a fair and impartial manner.

The CSD attaches great importance to the conduct, integrity and ethics of its staff and issues guidelines from time to time as reference materials for personal behaviour, ethics and discipline. The department will not hesitate to make referrals to other law enforcement agencies if any staff member is found violating the law.

The allegations by the above-mentioned discharged person in custody have already been referred to the Complaints Investigation Unit of the CSD for follow-up action and the investigation is still in progress.

The CSD suggests that individual persons in custody or discharged persons who feel aggrieved by any treatment received during imprisonment should lodge a complaint or air their grievances through various channels including the Complaints Investigation Unit, the visiting Justices of the Peace, the Ombudsman, members of the Legislative Council, the Equal Opportunities Commission or other law enforcement agencies.

The CSD from time to time reviews the complaint handling mechanism with a view to ensuring that complaints are properly dealt with and handles complaints in an open, fair and just manner. To widen the structure of the

CSD Complaints Appeal Board (CSDCAB) and further strengthen the mechanism to scrutinise appeals, the number of members was increased from 10 to 18 in 2018. Apart from Justices of the Peace, religious persons who are acquainted with correctional operations were also appointed. The independence of the CSDCAB ensures that such appeal cases are handled fairly.

The CSD has equipped its staff with the Video Speaker Microphone (VSM) system with an aim of collecting audio and visual information of incidents that occur inside or outside correctional facilities for facilitating investigations into indiscipline or criminal behaviour and the complaints against the CSD and the relevant prosecutions. The CSD has set out clear instructions for staff on the use of the VSM system. The CSD referred the relevant allegations to the Complaints Investigation Unit for investigation together.

[Opening remarks by CE at media session on letter issued by Central People's Government \(with video\)](#)

Following are the opening remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session this afternoon (February 26):

The Central People's Government (CPG) issued a letter to me today, stating clearly its views 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. I want to make the contents of the letter public instantly through the media. I know that the CPG will also release the full text of the letter later.

The letter contains three points.

(1) The CPG notes that the Secretary for Security of the HKSAR Government made an order to prohibit the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" in Hong Kong on September 24, 2018. On February 19, 2019, the Chief Executive in Council of the HKSAR decided and confirmed that the order made by the Secretary for Security was effective. The CPG supports the HKSAR Government's decision to prohibit the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" in accordance with the law.

(2) The letter reiterates that in accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, the HKSAR has the constitutional responsibility to safeguard national security in accordance with the law. The HKSAR is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of

China and a local administrative region, which enjoys a high degree of autonomy and comes directly under the CPG. 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.

(3) The letter states that the Chief Executive of the HKSAR is accountable to the CPG and the HKSAR in accordance with the law. The CPG requests 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.

As you may remember, over the past half year or so, the HKSAR Government has undergone various legal procedures for prohibiting the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" in accordance with the local legislation, i.e. the Societies Ordinance. On July 17, 2018, upon receiving the recommendation of the Assistant Societies Officer, the Secretary for Security invoked section 8 of the Societies Ordinance and issued letters to the "Hong Kong National Party" to give it an opportunity to make representations as to why an order prohibiting its operation or continued operation should not be made.

Following three extensions of time for making representations, the Secretary for Security decided on September 24, 2018 to make an order under section 8(2) of the Societies Ordinance to prohibit the operation or continued operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" on the grounds that it was necessary in the interests of national security, public safety, public order and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. The order was published in the Gazette and took effect on the same day. On October 24, 2018, two office bearers of the "Hong Kong National Party" lodged appeals to the Chief Executive in Council against the order made by the Secretary for Security in accordance with section 8(7) of the Societies Ordinance just before the expiry of the 30-day appeal period. On February 19, 2019, the Chief Executive in Council dismissed the appeals, confirming the order made by the Secretary for Security. The appellants were informed of the results on February 21, 2019.

As pointed out by the Secretary for Security when he prohibited the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party", his decision was made after prudent, careful and thorough consideration and was necessary in the interests of national security, public safety, public order, etc. Prohibiting the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" is in line with our zero-tolerance stance on acts advocating the "independence of Hong Kong". Expressing its support in the form of a letter, the CPG gives due recognition to the work of the HKSAR Government. Its request for the Chief Executive, that is myself, to submit a report to the CPG on the HKSAR Government's handling of circumstances in relation to the matter manifests the constitutional responsibility of the Chief Executive, who is accountable to the Central People's Government.

As I have just received the letter today, my initial thinking is the report will cover the process, the facts and the legal procedures for the prohibition of the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party" by the HKSAR

Government, demonstrating that the HKSAR Government acts according to the law. I am inclined to publicise the report but will seek the advice of the Department of Justice as to whether the report can be made public, having regard to possible judicial reviews lodged by the individuals concerned.

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected smuggled dried shark fins and seafood \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (February 25) conducted an anti-smuggling operation and detected a suspected smuggling case using a fishing vessel in the waters off Shek Ngau Chau. Suspected smuggled goods including about 100 kilograms of suspected smuggled dried shark fins, 1,175kg of geoduck clams, 453kg of frozen grouper and 18kg of coral fishes with an estimated market value of about \$680,000 were seized.

Customs officers of the Marine Enforcement Group spotted a suspicious fishing vessel leaving Hong Kong yesterday evening. Customs officers then took immediate action and intercepted the fishing vessel for examination. The batch of suspected smuggled goods was seized on board the vessel.

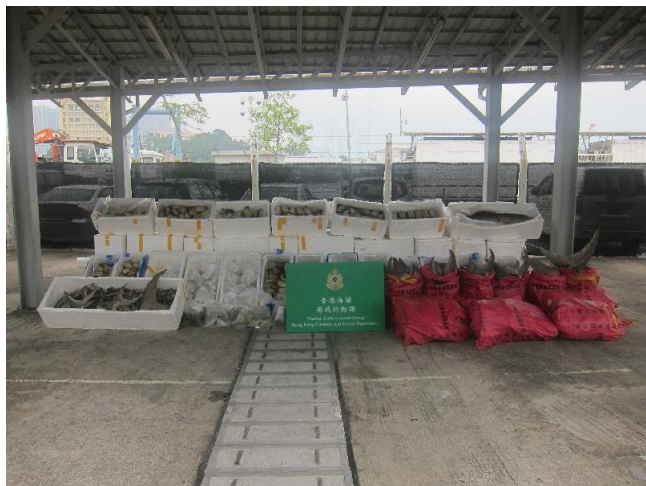
During the operation, Customs officers arrested two male crew members, aged 85 and 38, and seized the fishing vessel for investigation.

Investigation is ongoing.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

Hong Kong Customs will continue to take stringent enforcement action to combat sea smuggling activities.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



Human Resources Planning Commission convenes fifth meeting

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, chaired the fifth meeting of the Human Resources Planning Commission this afternoon (February 26).

At the meeting, the Commission discussed the revised proposal for setting up a new integrated portal on manpower information presented by the Secretariat of the Commission. Following up on Members' deliberations and comments at the last meeting, the Secretariat engaged a number of experienced information technology industry practitioners and refined the proposal in light of their advice.

Mr Cheung pointed out that there is currently a lack of career-related information channels for the working population in the market. Through interactive information and appropriate guidance on upskilling, career advancement and career development plans, the integrated portal on manpower information will help the working population to stay competitive, thereby enabling them to cope with the rapid changes brought about by technological advancement to the work environment.

The portal will be underpinned by an integrated database on jobs, skills and training information and supplemented by regularly updated theme-based content on trending topics about careers and the job market to attract patronage. The design of the portal will also cater for prevailing web-browsing habits and people's preferences, with a view to enhancing overall user experience. Based on Members' views, the Secretariat will continue to follow up on the development of the portal, which is expected to be launched by the end of this year.

Members also noted the key findings of the Report on Digital Economy and Talent Development in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

The report was jointly published by the Center for Internet Development and Governance of the Tsinghua University School of Economics and Management and LinkedIn, and analyses the distribution and movement of high level and digital talents of different sectors in GBA cities based on LinkedIn's membership database.

The key findings illustrate that Hong Kong has advantages in terms of talents in finance, education and corporate services sectors, which could well complement the strengths of other cities in the GBA. In terms of talent mobility, the report acknowledges Hong Kong's attractiveness to overseas and Mainland talents. Members noted the key findings and said they believed that the GBA would bring about enormous development opportunities for talents in Hong Kong. They also shared views on how to better leverage Hong Kong's comparative strengths to contribute to the development of the GBA.

Mr Cheung added that the Central Government promulgated the GBA Outline Development Plan last week (February 18). The focuses of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government's future work would include developing an international innovation and technology hub, expanding the scope of development for sectors in which Hong Kong's strengths lie, strengthening infrastructural connectivity, and fostering youth innovation and entrepreneurship. The Government would also launch a series of publicity efforts to help enterprises and members of the public, particularly young people, understand and take advantage of development opportunities brought about by the development of the GBA.