

## **Building construction site in Sai Ying Pun convicted of using powered mechanical equipment to carry out works on Sunday**

The main contractor of a building construction site in Sai Ying Pun, Hop Kee Construction Company Limited, and its subcontractor, Kong Wing Engineering Company, illegally used powered mechanical equipment to carry out works on a Sunday. They were fined a total of \$20,000 by Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (January 14) for contravening the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO).

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) received a complaint from a member of the public in March last year about the noise nuisance generated by a construction site at the junction of Chung Ching Street and Ki Ling Lane in Sai Ying Pun on Sunday. Upon investigation, EPD staff found that the main contractor and subcontractor of the construction site concerned did not apply for a construction noise permit (CNP) and illegally used powered mechanical equipment to carry out works on a Sunday, including the use of an excavator and generator to erect site hoarding. After investigation and evidence gathering, the EPD prosecuted the main contractor and its subcontractor in accordance with the NCO.

The NCO aims to protect the public from disturbance of rest. An EPD spokesman stressed that construction contractors should schedule works for the daytime and non-general holidays as far as possible, so as to minimise noise nuisance to the surroundings. If the construction work has to be conducted during restricted hours (between 7pm and 7am on the following day, or at any time on a general holiday), the contractor has to obtain a valid CNP from the EPD. Only specified powered mechanical equipment could be used for the construction works and contractors must also implement noise mitigation measures to minimise noise nuisance as stipulated by the CNP. Otherwise, it constitutes an offence. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$200,000 may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.

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## **Transcript of remarks by SFST at media session**

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, at a media session after attending

the Plenary Session of the 12th Asian Financial Forum this morning (January 14):

Reporter: Do you see an outflow of capital from Hong Kong? And the second question is the Chief Executive said the Government had no immediate plan to relax the loan-to-value ratio for property mortgage, does the Government have any timetable on the relaxation?

Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury: There were two questions. The first question is on the so-called "capital flow". But you are referring actually to the aggregate balance of the banking system, which represents the liquidity in the interbank market. As the Hong Kong Monetary Authority has repeatedly emphasised, the so-called "inflow" and "outflow" in the aggregate balance depends on the supply and demand for US dollar versus Hong Kong dollar. So there is nothing to worry about, and that change in the aggregate balance only reflects the redemption of US dollar versus Hong Kong dollar.

The second question is on the mortgage financing, the loan-to-value ratio. As I explained just now in Chinese, the Government has actually initiated special measures on the stamp duty for the market, and for the Monetary Authority, they have special measures, counter-cyclical measures regarding the mortgage loan-to-value ratio. We have currently no plan as we mentioned just now, and there is no timetable as such. But as the Financial Secretary mentioned before, we will be monitoring the supply of flats on the market and also the trend for the changes in the property prices, and also we will be looking at the general macroeconomic environment and also the local economic environment. So based on the combination of these factors then, we will be monitoring the developments and see what will be the next step. Thank you very much.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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## **Director-General of Investment Promotion visits London and Milan to promote Hong Kong's latest business advantages**

â€‹The Director-General of Investment Promotion, Mr Stephen Phillips, today (January 14) started his visits to London in the United Kingdom and Milan in Italy, in the latest promotion bid to update local businesspeople on the diverse opportunities Hong Kong has to offer.

Mr Phillips will meet leaders of companies and institutions in a wide

range of sectors including financial services, banks, fintech, creative industries, logistics and maritime, innovation and technology, research groups and think tanks and more. During the meetings, he will introduce the latest developments of the respective sectors in Hong Kong and various tax incentives offered by the Government to encourage companies setting up in Hong Kong and spending on research and development. He will also attend a number of seminars hosted in collaboration with local business associations, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in London and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

Mr Phillips said, "Over the last four decades of China's reform and opening up, Hong Kong and Mainland's economies have increasingly become inextricably linked. Today, Hong Kong plays a vital role in international investment both into and from the Mainland, making it the world's third largest foreign direct investment recipient. For this and many other reasons, Hong Kong is creating exciting business opportunities in many spheres."

He added, "The Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development are two critical national economic development strategies that will also enhance Hong Kong's role in relation to the Mainland's ongoing economic growth. Over the past few years, we have seen the rise of many robust sectors in Hong Kong on different frontiers such as fintech, innovation and various professional services. I believe that all this will make our city an even more important stronghold for European companies who want to gain access to Mainland China and the Asian markets at large."

The Belt and Road Initiative is offering a long-term prospect of transnational and intercontinental connectivity and will give rise to rewarding business prospects including new air, sea and land routes; additional ports; railways and roads connecting different regions; economic and trade pacts; and increased investment flow.

The Greater Bay Area will serve as a powerful connection point for the Belt and Road. A cluster of nine flourishing cities in Guangdong Province together with the Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions, it has a collective population of over 68 million and a combined gross domestic product of some US\$1.5 trillion.

#### About Invest Hong Kong

Invest Hong Kong is the department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government responsible for attracting foreign direct investment and supporting overseas and Mainland businesses to set up or expand in Hong Kong. It provides free advice and customised services for overseas and Mainland companies. For more information, please visit [www.investhk.gov.hk](http://www.investhk.gov.hk).

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# LegCo to debate motion on reviewing Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) will hold a meeting on Wednesday (January 16) at 11am in the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. During the meeting, Members will debate a motion on reviewing the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme.

The motion, moved by Mr Shiu Ka-chun, states: "That, given that the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme is outdated, the amount of assistance received by CSSA recipients is unable to cover their basic needs in daily lives, this Council urges the Government to immediately review and improve the CSSA Scheme, particularly the mechanism to determine the amount of assistance, so as to safeguard the basic income of CSSA recipients."

Dr Fernando Cheung, Mr Leung Che-cheung, Mr Leung Yiu-chung, Dr Kwok Ka-ki and Mr Au Nok-hin will move separate amendments to Mr Shiu Ka-chun's motion.

Mr James To will move a motion on increasing housing supply in the short to medium term to rectify the problem of public housing shortage. The motion states: "That, in the recently announced Long Term Housing Strategy, the Government has revised the new public and private housing supply in the 10-year period from 2019-2020 to 2028-2029 to a ratio of 7:3; however, due to inadequate supply of land for housing construction, it is anticipated that public housing supply in the short to medium term will fail to meet the expected target; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to adopt the following measures to increase public housing supply in the short to medium term:

- (1) to invoke the Lands Resumption Ordinance for the massive resumption of brownfield sites and idle agricultural lands in the New Territories, so as to open up new development areas for housing construction purpose;
- (2) to fully resume the 172-hectare site of the Fanling Golf Course for developing housing and relevant ancillary facilities;
- (3) to conduct studies on converting the use of the site which has been reserved for the second phase development of the Hong Kong Disneyland to public housing development;
- (4) to negotiate with the Central Government for releasing certain idle or under-utilised military sites in Hong Kong for housing development purpose;
- (5) to effect the participation of the Hong Kong Housing Authority in the

'Letting Scheme for Subsidised Sale Developments with Premium Unpaid' under the Hong Kong Housing Society, and to discuss the scheme with the Hong Kong Housing Society with a view to allowing owners to let their entire flats, subject to a pro-rata sharing of their rental incomes with the Government;

(6) to formulate redevelopment plans for aged public housing estates for the expeditious redevelopment of certain aged public housing estates with higher residual plot ratios, so as to increase the supply of public housing units; and

(7) to use the land resumed by the Urban Renewal Authority for developing subsidised housing (e.g. the 'Starter Homes' Scheme for Hong Kong Residents)."

Dr Lo Wai-ki, Mr Tony Tse, Dr Kwok Ka-ki, Ms Alice Mak, Dr Fernando Cheung, Mr Gary Fan, Mr Wilson Or, Mr Chu Hoi-dick and Dr Junius Ho will move separate amendments to Mr James To's motion.

On government bill, the Second Reading debate on the Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2018 will resume. If the Bill is supported by Members and receives its Second Reading, it will stand committed to the committee of the whole Council. After the committee of the whole Council has completed consideration of the Bill and its report is adopted by the Council, the Bill will be set down for the Third Reading.

During the meeting, Members will also ask the Government 22 questions on various policy areas, six of which require oral replies.

The agenda of the above meeting can be obtained via the LegCo Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)). Please note that the agenda is subject to change, and the latest information about the agenda could be found on the LegCo Website.

Members of the public are welcome to observe the proceedings of the meeting from the public galleries of the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. They may reserve seats by calling 3919 3399 during office hours. Members of the public can also watch or listen to the meeting via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website.

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## [Monthly ovitrap index for Aedes albopictus of December 2018 remains at low level](#)

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) announced today (January 14) that the monthly territory-wide ovitrap index for Aedes albopictus dropped from 0.8 per cent in November to 0.1 per cent in December

last year, indicating that the infestation of *Aedes albopictus* in the areas surveyed was not extensive and the ovitrap index remained at a low level.

"*Aedes albopictus* is a kind of mosquito that can transmit dengue fever (DF) and Zika virus. Despite the fact that the ovitrap index for *Aedes albopictus* continued to drop, in view of the 29 local DF cases recorded in Hong Kong last year, and that DF is highly prevalent in neighbouring areas while the breeding and activity of mosquitoes also continue in the winter season, the community should remain vigilant and carry out anti-mosquito measures during the year-end clean-up period to minimise the risk of mosquito-borne disease," an FEHD spokesman said.

Among the 57 areas surveyed last month, positive ovitrap indices were recorded in four areas, ranging from 0.7 per cent to 1.9 per cent, with Aberdeen and Ap Lei Chau ranked highest. As for the port areas, the monthly ovitrap index for *Aedes albopictus* for December fell to zero per cent from 0.04 per cent in November.

"The FEHD and relevant government departments will continue to intensify their mosquito prevention and control work covering areas under their purview and strengthen publicity and education campaigns. The year-end clean-up operation has commenced on January 11 this year, during which mosquito control work has been enhanced. The district offices of the FEHD will also target at areas which have drawn particular concerns, such as single-block buildings, village houses, construction sites, areas previously detected with local DF cases, and container terminals and cargo working areas in port areas, to intensify mosquito prevention and control work throughout winter," the spokesman said.

The department's Pest Control Inspection Teams also stepped up inspection of construction sites and enforcement action against mosquito breeding. As at December 31, 2018, the FEHD had instituted 206 prosecutions for mosquito breeding found in relevant premises under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132), comprising 197 cases involving construction sites and nine cases involving other premises.

In order to keep the public abreast of the latest situation of mosquito infestation and assist them to take timely mosquito prevention and control measures, the FEHD is releasing additional results of the Area Ovitrap Index (AOI) for *Aedes albopictus* at two more stages every month, before the announcement of the monthly AOI and the monthly ovitrap index for *Aedes albopictus*. The FEHD will follow the established practice of notifying relevant government departments of the aforementioned indices so that they can carry out targeted mosquito prevention and control work promptly to strengthen the anti-mosquito efforts.

The spokesman added that as *Aedes albopictus* breeds in small water bodies, members of the public should continue to carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures, including inspecting their homes and surroundings to remove potential breeding grounds, scrubbing vases and pot plant saucers at least once a week, properly disposing of containers such as

soft drink cans and lunch boxes, and drilling large holes in unused tyres. He also advised the public and estate management bodies to keep drains free of blockage and fill up all depressions to prevent puddles from forming. They should also scrub all drains and surface sewers with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any mosquito eggs.

In addition, rural areas and the vicinity of shrubby areas are the natural habitats for mosquitoes, other insects and animals. Members of the public living in rural areas may install mosquito screens on windows and doors if necessary. Those staying in the natural environment should follow appropriate personal protective measures against mosquitoes, such as avoiding staying in the vicinity of shrubby areas for a long time, wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and applying DEET-containing insect repellent. Members of the public are reminded to make reports to the government departments via 1823 if mosquito problems are detected.

The spokesman reiterated that effective mosquito control requires the sustained effort of all parties concerned. The community must work together with the Government to carry out effective mosquito control measures.

He also reminded travellers to take the following precautionary measures when visiting areas where mosquito-borne diseases are prevalent during the Lunar New Year holidays:

- \* Wear light-coloured, long-sleeved clothes and trousers;
  - \* Use insect repellents over exposed parts of the body when outdoors;
- and
- \* Use mosquito screens or nets when a room is not air-conditioned.

Travellers returning from these places should seek medical advice if they have symptoms such as fever, severe headache or muscle and joint pain. They should also inform their doctor of their travel history.

The ovitrap index is divided into four levels, reflecting the infestation level of *Aedes albopictus*. Level 1 (< 5 per cent) indicates that infestation of the mosquito is not extensive in the area surveyed. Level 2 (5 per cent – < 20 per cent) indicates that infestation of the mosquito is slightly more extensive in the area surveyed. Level 3 (20 per cent – < 40 per cent) indicates that infestation of the mosquito exceeds one-fifth of the area surveyed. Level 4 ( $\geq$  40 per cent) indicates that almost half of the surveyed area is infested with the mosquito. The Government will step up the scale of anti-mosquito operations according to the level of infestation as well as reports from front-line staff and the public.

As *Aedes albopictus* can transmit DF and Zika virus, ovitraps are set in 57 areas in Hong Kong for monitoring the breeding of *Aedes albopictus*, which is only one of the mosquito species commonly found in Hong Kong and is active only in the daytime. The index does not capture the activity of *Aedes albopictus* outside the 57 areas and it also does not measure the prevalence of other kinds of mosquitoes.

The ovitrap indices for *Aedes albopictus* in different areas and information on mosquito prevention and control measures are available on the department website at [www.fehd.gov.hk](http://www.fehd.gov.hk).