

## Transcript of remarks by SFH at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, at a media session after attending a radio programme this morning (September 1):

Reporter: Is the Government going to further step up the anti-mosquito work after the heavy rain in the past few days? And also, are you seeing the end of the outbreak because we've seen fewer cases reported?

Secretary for Food and Health: Heavy rain always poses challenges to mosquito control work. But the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department is stepping up all the mosquito control work, not only in Wong Tai Sin and Cheung Chau but also over the territory. I have previously announced that we have provided additional resources of \$4 million for the 18 districts to strengthen its mosquito control work, mainly for buying more machines for fogging, strengthening their manpower as well as doing more public education. As far as the dengue fever situation is concerned, the Centre for Health Protection has been monitoring the situation. Together with the Hospital Authority, they have created the e-Dengue platform so that we can more efficiently identify cases and treat them accordingly. In the past week, we have noticed less confirmed cases. But on the other hand, we are also very vigilant in monitoring the entire situation. We haven't slowed down our efforts. We do not rule out that there may be individual cases coming up in the future. We have stepped up our surveillance and also mosquito control work. We are also strengthening the number of fogging and mosquito control work in different high risk places, and also public education as well as manpower.

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

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## Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Sha Tin tomorrow

Police advise motorists that special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Sha Tin to facilitate the race meeting tomorrow (September 2).

The arrangements will come into effect two hours before the start of the first race and will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

Appropriate traffic signs will be put up and police will be on hand to

guide motorists.

The Police also appeal to people going to Sha Tin Racecourse for the race meeting and to Happy Valley Racecourse for cross betting to make maximum use of public transport.

Parking spaces at the two racecourses are available only to holders of appropriate permits issued by Hong Kong Jockey Club and any vehicles illegally parked will be towed away.

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## **FS to lead business mission to Israel**

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, will depart for Israel in the evening on September 2 to lead a four-day business mission to strengthen business and economic ties between Hong Kong and Israel and seek closer collaboration on the innovation and technology (I&T) front.

The delegation is comprised of more than 30 business leaders representing companies in the fields of financial services, venture capital investment, biotechnology, Fintech and smart city development. Also joining the delegation will be the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, and the Director-General of Investment Promotion, Mr Stephen Phillips.

Mr Chan, the other officials and the business delegates will visit Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

Apart from attending a briefing by the Israeli Government on business opportunities in Israel, they will meet representatives of the local business sector as well as visit local I&T companies and the research and development (R&D) institute of a local university.

Mr Chan will also call on senior officials of the Israeli Government.

While in Tel Aviv, Mr Chan will give a keynote speech at a luncheon jointly organised by the HKSAR Government and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council to promote stronger economic and I&T collaboration between Hong Kong and Israel. He will also speak at the 6th Annual China Business Summit to showcase Hong Kong's unique strengths which make it the ideal platform for enterprises in seizing new opportunities under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Mr Chan will return to Hong Kong in the morning on September 7 (Hong Kong time). During his absence, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, will act as the Financial Secretary.

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## Red flag hoisted at Silverstrand 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 (September 1) that due to inclement weather, red flag has been hoisted at Silverstrand Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

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## Labour Department enhances employment programmes to promote employment of elderly, young people and persons with disabilities

The Labour Department launches new measures to enhance the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged (EPM), the Youth Employment and Training Programme (YETP) and the Work Orientation and Placement Scheme (WOPS) today (September 1) to encourage employers to hire the elderly, young people and persons with disabilities.

To reflect the new measures for promoting the employment of the elderly, the EPM is renamed the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) today. Employers engaging elderly job seekers aged 60 or above who are unemployed or have left the workforce will be offered an on-the-job training allowance up to \$4,000 per month per employee for a period of six to 12 months under the EPEM. For employers engaging unemployed job seekers aged 40 to 59, the maximum amount of on-the-job training allowance will remain \$3,000 per month per employee for a period of three to six months.

The scope of YETP is expanded with immediate effect to cover part-time on-the-job training posts to meet the needs of some young people. The ceiling of the on-the-job training allowance payable to employers is also raised from \$3,000 to \$4,000 per month per trainee for a period of six to 12 months so as to encourage employers to hire young people and provide them with quality on-the-job training.

To further encourage employers to hire persons with disabilities who

have employment difficulties and assist them in settling into new posts, the WOPS is enhanced today with the work adaptation period (WAP) extended from two months to three months. The ceiling of the monthly allowance is also raised from \$5,500 to \$7,000 during the three-month WAP and from \$4,000 to \$5,000 for the ensuing six months. With this enhancement, the maximum period within which the allowance is payable is extended from eight to nine months, with the maximum allowance payable to employers increased by \$16,000 to a total of \$51,000 for each hired person with disabilities who has employment difficulties. The cash award for the mentor will also be increased by \$500 to a total of \$1,500 if the mentor successfully assists the employee with disabilities to stay on the job after the three-month WAP.

Through the provision of training allowance to employers, the EPEM encourages employers to take on mature unemployed job seekers aged 40 or above in full-time or part-time jobs and offer them on-the-job training. This will enable mature job seekers to adapt to the new working environment and acquire essential job-specific skills with a view to securing stable employment. The YETP provides comprehensive training and employment support to young school leavers aged 15 to 24 with educational attainment at sub-degree level or below. Under the programme, various recruitment activities and collaborations with training bodies and employers on different special employment projects are also organised to enhance the employability of young people. The WOPS aims to encourage employers to hire persons with disabilities and provide them with coaching and support through the provision of financial incentives, so as to enhance the employability and career prospects of these job seekers.

Details of the employment programmes are available from the EPEM's webpage ([www.jobs.gov.hk/info/epem](http://www.jobs.gov.hk/info/epem)), YETP's website ([www.yes.labour.gov.hk](http://www.yes.labour.gov.hk)), and Interactive Selective Placement Service's website ([www.jobs.gov.hk/isps](http://www.jobs.gov.hk/isps)). The public can also call the EPEM Co-ordination Office at 2150 6398, YETP's hotline at 2112 9932, or the Selective Placement Division at 2755 4835 for more information.