

S for S to lead Hong Kong Disciplined Services Cultural Exchange Delegation on visit to Beijing

The Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, will lead the Hong Kong Disciplined Services Cultural Exchange Delegation, which comprises representatives from five disciplined services, on visit to Beijing departing tomorrow (August 26).

Led by the Secretary for Security and the heads of the five disciplined services, the Delegation will consist of about 120 representatives from the Correctional Services Department, the Customs and Excise Department, the Fire Services Department, the Immigration Department and the Hong Kong Police.

Through visits and exchanges, the delegation aims to get an update on the latest developments on the Mainland, learn more about their counterparts and local culture, and strengthen future co-operation. The delegation will visit Hangzhou and Shanghai for two days each from August 29 to September 1.

While in Beijing, Mr Lee will meet and exchange views with officials from the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, the Ministry of Public Security, the General Administration of Customs, as well as the Ministry of Transport and its Rescue and Salvage Bureau.

Mr Lee will return to Hong Kong on August 28.

Transcript of remarks by STH

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, at a media session after attending radio programmes today (August 25):

Reporter: At which point and time would you consider offering concessions or discounts for passengers? And many people are concerned about the transparency of the MTR. How will the Government ensure the safety of the rail?

Secretary for Transport and Housing: In terms of preferential treatment or discount in terms of train fare, I would expect the MTR (Corporation) would liaise very closely with our counterparts in the Mainland to suitably adjust the fare in a timely manner so as to make the best use of the high-speed rail as the high-speed rail in the Mainland China has been nearly used to its

capacity. It's for all reason that we should ensure the Hong Kong Section (of the high-speed rail) as well as the connection to the Mainland cities be best used to optimise the limited resources for the benefit of Hong Kong and for passengers.

Reporter: And in respect of transparency...

Secretary for Transport and Housing: In respect of the transparency of operation safety, I would expect the MTR (Corporation) to timely and openly report to the public and to the Government if there is anything they find a little bit unusual or not in order because that is the expectation and aspiration of the Hong Kong community as well as the Government. Safety is of prime importance as far as railway operation is concerned.

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

Health risk category for Air Quality Health Index may reach "Serious" level

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has recorded higher than normal pollution levels. At noon today (August 25), the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) at some general stations reached 7, corresponding to the "High" health risk category.

There are sunny periods with relatively low visibility and light winds in Hong Kong today. Higher than normal levels of nitrogen dioxide and ozone have been recorded in the territory since this morning. Hong Kong is being affected by an air mass with higher background pollutant concentrations. In addition, the light wind hinders effective dispersion of air pollutants. The sunshine enhances photochemical smog activity and the formation of ozone and fine particulates, resulting in high pollution in the Pearl River Delta region. The high level of ozone has promoted the formation of nitrogen dioxide, particularly in parts of the urban areas and at the roadside. It is expected that the AQHI at some general and roadside air monitoring stations may reach the "Serious" level later today.

According to the Hong Kong Observatory, there will still be light winds tomorrow. It is expected that pollution levels will remain higher than normal until the wind strengthens early next week.

With a health risk category in the "Very High" range or above, children, the elderly and persons with existing heart or respiratory illnesses are advised to reduce physical exertion and outdoor activities to a minimum or avoid such activities. The general public are advised to reduce, or reduce to a minimum, outdoor physical exertion, and to reduce time staying outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic. As health effects of air pollutants

may vary for individuals, persons who are in doubt or experience discomfort should seek advice from health-care professionals. The public may visit the Centre for Health Protection's website (www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/460/3557.html) for more information on health effects of air pollution and relevant health advice.

The Education Bureau (EDB) urges all schools to visit the EDB's website for appropriate measures to safeguard students' health and take note of changes in the index. The relevant hyperlink is as follows: www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-activities/sch-activities-guidelines/index.html.

When the AQHI is at the "Very High" level, employers of outdoor workers performing heavy manual work are advised to assess the risk of outdoor work and take appropriate preventive measures to protect the health of their employees such as reducing outdoor physical exertion and the time of their stay outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic. At the "Serious" level, employers of all outdoor workers are advised to assess the risk of outdoor work and take appropriate preventive measures to protect the health of their employees.

Members of the public can check the current AQHI readings at the EPD's website (www.aqhi.gov.hk/en.html) or by calling the hotline 2827 8541.

CHP reminds public on precautions against heat stroke during very hot weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (August 25) reminded members of the public, particularly those undertaking outdoor activities, to take heed of necessary measures against heat stroke and sunburn in very hot weather.

"The public should carry and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration while engaging in outdoor activities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Those engaged in strenuous outdoor activities should avoid beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee and tea, as well as alcohol, as they speed up water loss through the urinary system," the spokesman explained.

"The obese, the sick, including those with heart disease or high blood pressure, the old and the young are more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses. They should pay special attention," the spokesman added.

The public should adopt the following precautions:

- Wear loose and light-coloured clothing to reduce heat absorption and facilitate sweat evaporation and heat dissipation;
- Avoid vigorous exercise and prolonged activities like hiking or trekking as heat, sweating and exhaustion place additional demands on the physique;
- Perform outdoor activities in the morning or late afternoon;
- For indoor activities, open all windows, use a fan or use air-conditioning to maintain good ventilation; and
- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day.

If working in a hot environment is inevitable, introduce shade in the workplace where practicable, and start work slowly and pick up the pace gradually. Get into a cool area for rest at regular intervals to allow the body to recuperate.

The public should also note the latest and the forecast Ultraviolet (UV) Index released by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO). When the UV Index remains high (6 or above):

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and the eyes to sunlight;
- Wear loose long-sleeved clothing made of close-woven fabrics;
- Wear a wide brim hat or use an umbrella;
- Seek a shaded area or put on UV-blocking sunglasses;
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen lotion with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or above. Apply liberally and reapply after swimming or sweating; and
- While using DEET-containing insect repellents for personal protection against mosquito-borne diseases, apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

If symptoms develop, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, shortness of breath or confusion, rest and seek help immediately, and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

The public may get more information from the DH's Health Education Hotline (2833 0111), [heat stroke](#) page and [UV radiation](#) page; the HKO's Dial-a-Weather (1878 200), latest [weather and forecast](#), [UV Index](#) and weather information for [hiking and mountaineering](#); and [press releases](#) of the Labour Department on precautions against heat stroke for outdoor workers and their employers when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force.

Assess the risk of heat stroke to employees

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force:

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force, they should assess the risk of heat stroke to their employees and adopt effective preventive measures such as providing cool drinking water, setting up temporary sunshade and providing mechanical aids to reduce physical exertion of employees. Employees should drink water regularly and be mindful of their physical condition. If early heat stroke symptoms such as headache and thirst appear, they should inform their supervisors and seek medical help immediately.