

Third-term Commission on Poverty convenes first meeting

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, chaired the first meeting of the third-term Commission on Poverty (CoP) this afternoon (August 23).

The third-term CoP comprises 21 non-official members from different sectors including the Legislative Council, business, welfare organisations, education and social entrepreneurship. For the first time, an ethnic minority member has been appointed to the CoP. The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, the Secretary for Home Affairs, the Secretary for Education and the Secretary for Food and Health continue to be ex-officio members.

Mr Cheung said, "The membership of the CoP is highly representative, which is conducive to the promotion of tripartite collaboration amongst the community, business and government, and the examination of policies and measures to alleviate poverty and support the disadvantaged."

At the meeting, members discussed a number of tasks of the CoP, namely monitoring the poverty situation through the analytical framework of the poverty line as well as taking forward the work of the Community Care Fund and the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund established under the CoP. Members took note of the poverty line analytical framework and the supplementary analyses developed under the framework, including a thematic study on the elderly poverty situation, an analysis on households facing higher poverty risk and a study on the effects of demographic changes to the poverty figures. Members also noted that the poverty analysis and statistics for 2017 will be released in the fourth quarter of this year.

In addition, members were briefed on the key tasks and achievements made by the CoP in the last two terms. Members also provided views on the CoP's future work direction.

Manager of unlicensed guesthouse fined

A man was fined \$10,000 at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (August 23) for contravening the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance.

The courts heard that in July last year, officers of the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA), the Home Affairs Department, inspected a suspected unlicensed guesthouse on Nathan Road in Mong Kok. During the inspection, the

OLA officers posed as lodgers and successfully rented a room in the guesthouse on a daily basis.

According to the OLA's record, the guesthouse did not possess a licence under the Ordinance on the day of inspection. The man responsible for managing the premise was charged with contravening section 5(1) of the Ordinance.

A department spokesman stressed that operating or managing an unlicensed guesthouse is a criminal offence and will lead to a criminal record. Upon conviction, the offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The spokesman appealed to anyone with information about suspected unlicensed guesthouses to report it to the OLA through the hotline (tel: 2881 7498), by email (hadlaeng@had.gov.hk), by fax (2504 5805) using the report form downloaded from the OLA website (www.hadla.gov.hk), or through the mobile application "Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses".

Company's director sentenced to imprisonment for default of wages and Labour Tribunal awarded payment

The director of a limited company has been prosecuted by the Labour Department (LD) for failing to pay 18 employees wages and defaulting on a sum awarded by the Labour Tribunal (LT) to two employees under the Employment Ordinance (E0). The director pleaded guilty at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts on August 9 and was sentenced to four weeks' immediate imprisonment today (August 23). The defendant was also ordered to pay an outstanding sum of about \$396,000.

Yiu Fung Logistics Company Limited failed to pay 18 employees wages totalling about \$388,000 within seven days after the termination of employment in contravention of the E0. Also, the company failed to pay awarded sums of about \$40,000 to two employees within 14 days after the specified payment date of the LT award. The director concerned was convicted for her consent, connivance or neglect in the above offences.

"The judgment would disseminate a strong message to all employers and responsible officers of companies that they have to pay employees wages within the time limit in accordance with the E0 and awarded sums according to the terms of awards issued by the LT or the Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board," a spokesman for the LD said.

"The LD will not tolerate these offences and will spare no effort in enforcing the law and safeguarding employees' statutory rights," the spokesman added.

Sino Estates Management Limited convicted for discharging substandard wastewater at Olympian City shopping mall

â€œOlympian City 1 in West Kowloon discharged substandard wastewater into communal sewers and thereby violated the requirements of the wastewater discharge licence. Its management company, Sino Estates Management Limited, was fined \$20,000 by Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (August 23) for contravening the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO).

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Environmental Protection Department (EPD) enforcement officers conducted an inspection at Olympian City 1 last February and found that the discharge from one of the grease traps of the shopping mall was turbid. It was suspected that the grease trap was not operating properly, resulting in the discharge of substandard wastewater into communal sewers downstream. The EPD officers then collected wastewater samples for analysis and the results showed that the concentrations of oil and grease exceeded the upper limits of the wastewater discharge licence by five times. After investigation and evidence gathering, the EPD initiated prosecution against the property management company of the shopping mall, Sino Estates Management Limited, in accordance with the WPCO. The management company has taken remedial measures, including cleaning the grease trap to ensure its proper operation.

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A spokesperson for the EPD reminded property management companies and wastewater discharge licensees that they should arrange regular cleaning and maintenance of the grease traps and wastewater treatment facilities for premises under their management. They should also ensure the proper operation of these facilities and strictly adhere to the discharge standards as stipulated in the licence to prevent blockage of public sewers downstream and overflow of wastewater, which will adversely affect environmental hygiene.

Under the WPCO, anyone who discharges commercial or industrial wastewater into communal sewers not in compliance with the standard of the discharge licence commits an offence. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment.

Speech by CE at Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme Award Presentation Ceremony 2018 (English Only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme Award Presentation Ceremony 2018 today (August 23):

Victor (Chairman, Steering Committee of the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme, Dr Victor Fung), scholars, parents, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

As always, it is a pleasure to be here among so many who value the rewards of scholarship, whose life work is in the passionate pursuit of educational, intellectual and creative achievement at the highest levels. We come together today for the fourth consecutive year under the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme. Counting this year's award-winners, more than 360 students have been named Hong Kong Scholars since the Scheme's inception and given the priceless gift of studying at acclaimed universities all over the world. Given its resounding success, I am pleased to say that the Scheme, initially started as a pilot with time-limited funding, will become a permanent feature in the Government's effort to nurture young people starting from the 2019/20 academic year. This underlines the success of the Scheme, which in no small part is due to the achievements of the previous cohorts of scholars, many of whom I have met in Hong Kong or abroad.

This afternoon, however, let us focus on this year's extraordinary students. Among some 800 applications, all are high achievers and 83 were ultimately chosen. Fifty-eight of you are about to begin your undergraduate studies. Another 25 are destined for postgraduate programmes. All will be studying at renowned international universities. I am very pleased to know that, for the first time, we have a scholar going to a French institution. Like everyone else here today, I take pride in your determined efforts and outstanding academic results. My congratulations to each and every one of you.

That said, let me add this essential caveat. While you should cherish your singular achievements, and all those who have helped you realise them, don't lose sight of the larger reality: your hard-won scholarship is not an end but merely a beginning. There will be more studies, more work, more decisions on the long and winding road to realising your potential. Eventually, there will be a career – likely more than one – as you build your

life, find your places as valuable pillars of society. This is indeed one of the main reasons behind the launching of this Government Scholarship Scheme in 2014. If Hong Kong is to maintain and retain a prosperous international economy and a rewarding community in which to live and work, we need a younger generation like you.

With that in mind, I must say I'm impressed by the diversified interests and talents of this year's scholarship winners. That's evident in the wide spectrum of disciplines you will be pursuing in the coming years. They range from mathematics and the natural sciences to computing and engineering, the social sciences, business, finance and economics, law, medicine and culture too. They include, as well, music and fine arts, along with disciplines not available in Hong Kong, such as drama therapy and archaeology. That diversity, ladies and gentlemen, reflects well on the passions, pursuits and vibrancy of this year's scholarship awardees. And it can only make Hong Kong an even more splendid place in which to live, love and work in.

For that, my thanks to the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme's Steering Committee, particularly its Chairman, Dr Victor Fung. My thanks, as well, to the interview panel members and mentors of the scholars for their substantial commitment and contributions. Your efforts, your guidance and generosity, have led to another fruitful and rewarding year.

I must also thank the parents, teachers and principals of our scholarship winners. Day after day, year after year, you have helped nurture Hong Kong's next generation of achievers, creators and leaders. You should be proud of your sacrifices, your accomplishments and the future you have helped make possible.

Last September, during my visit to London, I met some of our young scholars studying in the United Kingdom. They told me about their dreams, as well as their aspirations to contribute to Hong Kong after graduating. That was certainly gratifying for me personally. I look forward to meeting the scholars this year in the future, either in Hong Kong or in your places of study, and listening to your story. For now, I will congratulate you again and wish you all the best in your endeavours.

Thank you very much.

