

Government spokesman responds to court decision

The High Court handed down today (August 24) the decision on an application for an interim stay of the decision on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the partial development of the Fanling Golf Course. In response to media enquiries, a Government spokesman gave the following response:

The court decided to grant an interim stay of the decision of the Director of Environmental Protection to approve the EIA report, but made it clear that the Civil Engineering and Development Department would not be prevented from conducting the review on housing density and layout to fulfill the approval conditions of the EIA report. We respect the court's decision.

The Government will resume the 32 hectares of land of the Fanling Golf Course east of Fan Kam Road on September 1 as scheduled. The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau has announced the venue management and opening arrangements. The Town Planning Board will proceed with the ongoing statutory town planning procedures.

Government continues to enhance enforcement action and support against buildings with non-complied notices under Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme

A spokesman for the Buildings Department (BD) today (August 24) gave an account of the progress of the enforcement and support measures for building inspections and repairs.

The spokesman also said that the BD, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) and the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) have been providing information and support to owners by organising district briefings and proactively approaching owners or owners' corporations (OCs). The spokesman encouraged owners to make good use of these support services and complete the inspection and repair works as soon as possible.

The Government announced on July 19

(www.devb.gov.hk/en/publications_and_press_releases/press/index_id_11570.html) a series of measures to step up enforcement and provide support to building owners or OCs, with a focus on following up on buildings with expired Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) notices that have not been complied with. The progress of work in various aspects is set out below.

(a) Monitoring the appointment of registered inspectors (RIs) and the progress of building inspections

Regarding the some 1 800 buildings in which RIs have been appointed, the BD has issued letters to the relevant RIs since late July, with copies to the owners concerned, requesting an account of the progress within one month and urging them to expedite the inspection and/or repair works. The BD has completed issuing letters to the buildings concerned.

With regard to the some 900 buildings in which RIs have not yet been appointed, the BD has issued warning letters to the owners or OCs concerned since late July, requesting them to appoint RIs to carry out inspection work as soon as possible, and to report the progress or provide a concrete work plan within one month. Before issuing warning letters, the BD will verify owners' information and the progress of building inspections. As at today, the department has issued warning letters to about 700 buildings and will complete the issuance of letters to the remaining buildings within this month.

(b) Instigating prosecution

With regard to (a) above, the BD will scrutinise the progress reports or work plans received. If there are no reasonable justifications and the progress is unsatisfactory, depending on the circumstances of individual cases, the BD will commence prosecution proceedings against owners or OCs concerned in the fourth quarter of this year. However, if there are cases in which owners show an intention to procrastinate, the BD will deal with such cases promptly and instigate prosecution proceedings as soon as possible.

(c) Conducting special inspections of external walls

Regarding the abovementioned some 900 buildings that have not yet appointed RIs, the BD has already started to identify buildings with potentially higher risks (such as older buildings, buildings facing major roads, buildings with reports of dilapidation, "three-nil" buildings, and buildings with balconies/canopies of cantilevered slab structures), and has taken the initiative to carry out special inspections of the external walls of the buildings by using drones since the beginning of this month. If obvious hazards are found, the BD will arrange for government contractors to carry out emergency works on behalf of the owners, and recover the costs from them afterwards.

As at today, the BD has completed the special inspection of the external walls of 22 buildings. Among them, 19 buildings were found to have loose rendering/concrete on the external walls or the soffit of balconies/canopies,

and BD staff have immediately arranged government contractors to carry out emergency works to remove the loosened part, and will recover the costs of the emergency works from the owners concerned afterwards.

The BD's first round target is to complete the inspection of the external walls of 30 buildings with potentially higher risks in early September. The BD has deployed its own staff and is now engaging building consultants to help identify more buildings with potentially higher risks from those that have not yet appointed RIs, so as to ascertain the condition of the external walls and whether there is any obvious danger that requires emergency works as soon as possible.

The spokesman said that the aforementioned inspection of external walls was a special operation of the BD to minimise risks to public safety arising from those buildings which have not carried out the prescribed inspections and repairs. However, such special operations cannot replace the owners' responsibility for building inspections and maintenance, and the owners or OCs concerned must expedite their actions to comply with the notices as early as possible. In addition, about 200 of the 900 buildings are "three-nil buildings". The BD will continue to work with the HAD and the URA to strengthen the provision of information, co-ordination, technical and financial support to them, including assistance in formation of OCs.

(d) Inspection and repair work for Category 2 buildings under the Operation Building Bright 2.0

Regarding the some 1 100 higher-risk buildings selected for Category 2 under the Operation Building Bright (OBB) 2.0 programme (Note), the BD will exercise its statutory power to carry out the necessary prescribed inspections and repair works on behalf of the owners and then recover the relevant costs from them afterwards. As at the end of July, about 30 buildings have completed the repair works, about 440 buildings are undergoing inspection, and about 630 buildings are under repair, of which about 150 buildings will complete the repair works within this year. With regard to the "three-nil buildings" mentioned in paragraph (c) above, the BD will also adopt a risk-based approach in selecting eligible buildings as Category 2 buildings under OBB 2.0.

In addition, a standing communication mechanism led by the Development Bureau with the participation of the BD, the HAD and the URA has been set up, and the first meeting was held on August 9 to enhance mutual collaboration. The follow-up actions are as follows:

(e) URA's support for owners or OCs in applying for subsidies and related professional assistance

Starting from August 18, the URA has again mailed leaflets to buildings that have outstanding MBIS notices and have been initially confirmed to be eligible for joining the OBB 2.0, so as to introduce the content of the subsidy scheme. At the same time, the URA has, through district organisations, proactively approached building owners in the respective districts of these organisations in order to assist the building owners to

apply for the subsidy scheme.

For buildings that have already joined the OBB 2.0, the URA is formulating more detailed progress requirements for building owners, OCs or property companies for compliance, so as to closely monitor and supervise the progress of the preparation for repair works.

The URA is also exploring ways to compress the workflow in order to expedite the processing of applications under the third round of the OBB 2.0, as well as assist owners in the work of engaging the RI and contractors within shorter timeframes.

(f) Organising district briefings to support owners or OCs

The BD, the URA and the HAD will organise district briefings for the aforesaid buildings that have not yet appointed RIs to explain the procedures for compliance with MBIS notices, provide information, co-ordination and support, and set up counters to offer advice to the public in person. The first seminar was held in Sham Shui Po on August 10 and was attended by about 50 members of the public with a positive response. Members of the public can watch the briefing online (elearning.bd.gov.hk/video-list/%E8%81%AF%E5%90%88%E5%9C%B0%E5%8D%80%E8%AC%9B%E5%BA%A7). The tripartite parties will continue to organise eight more briefings between August and November in other districts where there are buildings with overdue compliance notices. The briefings in Kowloon City, Yau Tsim Mong, Central and Western, and Wan Chai districts will be held on August 24, September 7, September 15 and September 28 respectively. Arrangements for the other four briefings will be announced when ready, and relevant details can be found at the link above.

The HAD will proactively approach the OCs or owners concerned to enhance the provision of information and remind them of the need to comply with the MBIS notices. If owners wish to form an OC, the HAD will provide appropriate support to the building owners concerned.

The spokesman reminds that it is building owners' responsibility to ensure their properties are well maintained and in safe condition, including to conduct regular inspections and timely repair of their properties. Owners are required to appoint RIs to carry out the prescribed inspections and repairs, otherwise they will not be regarded as complying with the requirements of the MBIS. The list of RIs is available on the BD's website: [www.bd.gov.hk/en/resources/online-tools/registers-search/registrationsearch-disclaimer.html?reg_type=RI\(A\),RI\(E\),RI\(S\)](http://www.bd.gov.hk/en/resources/online-tools/registers-search/registrationsearch-disclaimer.html?reg_type=RI(A),RI(E),RI(S)).

Members of the public can find details of the MBIS on the BD website (www.bd.gov.hk/en/safety-inspection/mbis/index.html), the BD's Chatbot Function "Ah Build" and mobile application "MBIS/MWIS – Quick Guide for MBIS/MWIS".

Note: A scheme with \$6 billion injected by the Government and implemented by the URA to subsidise eligible owners in co-ordinating inspection and repair works in respect of common parts under the MBIS. Buildings that are able to co-ordinate the necessary works among themselves

are considered as Category 1 buildings. The BD will exercise its statutory power in carrying out the necessary inspection and repair works on behalf of the owners, with the cost be recovered from the owners after completion of works, for Category 2 buildings. Eligible owners can apply for an OBB 2.0 subsidy to reimburse for part or all of the cost of the works.

Government response to media enquiries relating to Gay Games

In response to media enquiries relating to the Gay Games to be held in Hong Kong in November this year, a Government spokesman today (August 24) gave the following response:

Hong Kong is an international city, with many local, Mainland or overseas organisations hosting different events in Hong Kong. The organiser must comply with Hong Kong laws and regulations, regardless of where the events are held, including private venues, government venues or public spaces.

The Gay Games is hosted by a community organisation. Many of its events will be held in private venues. The Government has reminded the organiser to observe the laws and regulations in Hong Kong, regardless of whether the events are held in private venues or not. Any event application submitted to the Government, including those involving government venues or public spaces, will be handled in accordance with relevant laws and procedures. The applicant must follow the existing regulations and procedures to submit applications to the corresponding government departments. Some events may even require licences and permits to be applied for from relevant departments.

All departments will process applications for use of venues and public spaces in strict accordance with existing procedures and criteria. Subject to the details of the event, additional requirements including crowd control and safety measures will be imposed as necessary. Furthermore, all departments will clearly stipulate and require compliance with the laws in Hong Kong, and the rules and conditions set by the relevant departments, to ensure that the event is conducted in a lawful, safe and orderly manner.

[Appeal for information on missing man in Wong Tai Sin \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (August 24) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Wong Tai Sin.

Ning Kwok-leung, aged 57, went missing after he left his residence on King Fuk Street yesterday morning (August 23). His family made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.65 metres tall, 50 kilograms in weight and of medium build. He has a long face with yellow complexion and short white hair. He was last seen wearing a pair of glasses, an orange vest, sports shoes and carrying a black rucksack.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Persons Unit of Kowloon East on 3661 0321 or email to rmpu-ke-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



[SCS visits Marine Department \(with photos\)](#)

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mrs Ingrid Yeung, visited the Marine Department (MD) today (August 24) to meet with the management and frontline staff to understand the department's work including monitoring marine traffic, co-ordinating marine rescue operations, repairing and

maintaining government vessels as well as maritime training.

Mrs Yeung, together with the Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Clement Leung, was briefed by the Director of Marine, Ms Carol Yuen, and directorate staff on the department's operation and latest developments. They also met with staff representatives from various grades to exchange views on matters that concern them.

Mrs Yeung then visited the Vessel Traffic Centre (VTC) at the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal to see for herself how the VTC maintains surveillance over Hong Kong navigable waters through the third generation of the vessel traffic services system. At the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre, duty officers introduced to her the co-ordination work during search and rescue operations upon receipt of distress reports from vessels in Hong Kong waters and the South China Sea.

Mrs Yeung said while the world is under the influence of extreme weather, and inclement weather can easily lead to maritime incidents, the MD has to integrate its professional knowledge and make good use of information technology to ensure maritime traffic and port safety.

She also visited the Government Dockyard on Stonecutters Island to learn more about the repair and maintenance work of government vessels. During her tour, Mrs Yeung also visited the Marine Department Training Centre and was briefed by a duty officer on the marine training provided to the department's staff, including training through computer-based simulation systems which could simulate different marine traffic and emergency situations.



