

Flag-raising ceremony cancelled

Â Â Â Â Â Owing to the thunderstorm warning, the flag-raising ceremony to be conducted at Golden Bauhinia Square, Wan Chai at 8am today (June 15) will be cancelled.

Â Â Â Â Â If the thunderstorm warning is cancelled and weather conditions permit by then, the flag-raising ceremony may be resumed without further notice.

Employers, contractors and employees should be aware of electrical safety at work during rainstorm

As the rainstorm warning has been issued by the Hong Kong Observatory, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and contractors that they should adopt necessary work arrangements and take suitable safety measures to protect the safety of their employees when they are carrying out electrical work or handling electrical plant.

A spokesman for the LD said today (June 15) that employers and contractors should avoid assigning employees to carry out electrical work (like electric arc welding work) or handle electrical plant at places affected by rainstorms, and should refer to the "Code of Practice in Times of Adverse Weather and 'Extreme Conditions'" and the "Guide on Safety at Work in times of Inclement Weather" issued by the LD.

Even if electrical work is carried out or electrical plant is handled at places not affected by the rainstorm, suitable safety measures must still be adopted to prevent electric shock as the air would be more humid. Such measures include:

- (i) Ensure that all live parts of an electrical installation are isolated from the power supply source and rendered dead, and the isolation from the power supply source must be maintained as long as electrical work is being carried out;
- (ii) Before carrying out any electrical work or handling any electrical plant, cut off and lock out the power supply source, then test the circuit concerned to confirm it is dead and display suitable warning notices, and issue a work permit thereafter;
- (iii) Ensure that protective devices (such as suitable and adequate fuses and

circuit breakers) for the electrical installations or electrical plant have been installed and maintained in good working order, and portable electric tools must be double-insulated or properly earthed;

(iv) Provide suitable personal protective equipment such as insulating gloves and insulating mats for employees; and

(v) If live electrical work is unavoidable, a comprehensive risk assessment should be conducted by a competent person and the appropriate safety precautions should be taken to remove or properly control the electrical hazards involved before such work can proceed.

In addition, employees should co-operate with the employer or contractor to follow the safety instructions and use the safety equipment provided.

The LD has published guidebooks and leaflets on electrical work safety. These safety publications are available free from divisional offices of the department or can be downloaded from its website (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_8.htm).

Should there be any questions about occupational safety and health matters, please contact the Occupational Safety Officer of the LD at 2559 2297.

Public urged to report flooding

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

Members of the public are advised to report any street flooding that comes to their notice to the Drainage Services Department by calling the 24-hour drainage hotline on 2300 1110.

Territory-wide flag day today

The Hong Kong Student Aid Society Limited has been issued a Public Subscription Permit to hold a territory-wide flag sale from 7am to 12.30pm today (June 15), a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities, including any updated

information, covered by the issued Public Subscription Permits have been published on the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/en/theme/fundraising/search). Permits for flag days containing information on contact methods of the flag-selling organisations and the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/ngo/controlofc/flagdays) for reference. For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the designated hotline of the 1823 Call Centre at 3142 2678.

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

HKSAR Government responds to specification of absconders and measures applicable against them by S for S in accordance with Safeguarding National Security Ordinance

â€‹In response to media enquiries about the smearing comments made by the United States and some western countries regarding the specification of absconders and specific measures applicable against them by the Secretary for Security in accordance with the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance recently, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (June 14) strongly disapproves of and rejects these comments.

The HKSAR Government spokesman said, "The legal framework in safeguarding national security in the HKSAR is fully in compliance with the international standard for the protection of human rights. The Hong Kong National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance clearly stipulate that human rights shall be respected and protected in safeguarding national security. The rights and freedoms, including the freedoms of speech, of the press and of publication, and the freedoms of association, of assembly, of procession and of demonstration, enjoyed by Hong Kong people under the Basic Law and the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applicable to the HKSAR are protected in accordance with the law. Legislation that safeguards national security only targets a very small number of organisations and individuals that endanger national security."

The spokesman said, "Individuals endangering national security often abscond overseas to evade criminal liability, and continue to endanger

national security through various means (e.g. colluding with external forces to exert pressure on the Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government, or setting up, outside the HKSAR, organisations endangering national security, etc.). The specified measures aim at addressing, combating, deterring and preventing acts of abscondment, and procuring the return of absconded persons to Hong Kong to face law enforcement and judicial proceedings. People with ulterior motives in the United States and some western countries deliberately smeared and spread irresponsible remarks in an attempt to mislead the public. The HKSAR Government strongly disapproves of such acts."

The spokesman stressed, "Absconders should not think they can evade criminal liability by absconding from Hong Kong. Ultimately, they will be liable for their acts constituting serious offences endangering national security and be sanctioned by the law."

"Amongst all, the measures under section 96 of the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance seek to regard the HKSAR passport of an absconder as being cancelled and the application for an HKSAR passport by the absconder as being invalid. In fact, all specified measures including the abovementioned one align with human rights requirements; and quite a number of countries including the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada would also impose such measures on wanted criminals. It is indeed a demonstration of hypocrisy with double standards by any external forces or people with ulterior motives that, after the HKSAR Government has announced the relevant measures, attack the HKSAR in safeguarding national security dutifully, faithfully and in accordance with the law."

The spokesman reiterated, "The Constitution and the Basic Law steadfastly safeguard the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people. Any attempt by foreign countries or external forces to undermine Hong Kong's situation will only expose their own weakness and faulty arguments and be doomed to fail. The HKSAR Government will continue to unwaveringly discharge its duty in safeguarding national security."