

Labour Department launches special enforcement operation to ensure work safety

The Labour Department (LD) today (September 16) commenced a two-week special enforcement operation that targets construction sites of new works, with the aim of curbing unsafe work activities and ensuring the work safety of workers.

In view of the recent work accidents at construction sites, during the special enforcement operation, the LD will pay special attention to those high-risk construction sites and processes (e.g. lifting operation, work-at-height activity and electrical work). If any violations of the occupational safety and health (OSH) legislation are detected, the LD will take stringent enforcement actions immediately, including issuing suspension notices and improvement notices as well as initiating prosecutions without prior warning.

Under the general duty provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, employers are obligated to provide safe working environments, plant and systems of work for their employees. Those who contravene the relevant legislation with serious circumstances can be prosecuted on indictment, which is subject to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for two years; or \$3 million and imprisonment for six months on summary conviction of other cases.

The LD reiterated that safeguarding the OSH of construction workers is the top priority of the LD. The LD will continue to conduct different enforcement operations from time to time, and rigorous enforcement actions will be taken for any violations of the OSH legislation.