

Public urged to increase vigilance against landslides before wet season (with photos)

A total of 131 landslides were reported to the Government last year, less than the annual average of about 300 reported landslides over the past 25 years, the Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) announced today (March 30). However, the public are reminded to remain vigilant against the risk of landslides and private slope owners are urged to carry out slope maintenance before the wet season.

The Head of the GEO, Mr Pun Wai-keung, said the majority of the reported landslides last year affected roads, footpaths and squatter structures and the small number of landslides was mainly due to the fact that there were no severe rainstorms during the year.

"Given the effects of climate change, the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has predicted that extreme rainfall would become more frequent and more intense. Thus we should not be complacent about the landslide risk in Hong Kong. People should maintain vigilance and be alert to the weather warnings issued by the HKO during heavy rainstorms and follow relevant guidelines issued by the Government," he emphasised.

As more than 90 per cent of the fatal landslide cases over the past 30 years occurred while the Landslip Warning was in force, Mr Pun reminded members of the public to stay away from slopes when the Landslip Warning is in force or during heavy rain. Pedestrians should avoid walking or standing close to slopes, and motorists should avoid driving in hilly areas. If threatened by distressed slopes, they should not stay between the slopes and rigid structures, and instead should stay in rooms on higher floors or further away from the slopes while continuing to monitor the conditions and watch out for signs of a landslide.

More relevant information can be found in the leaflet entitled "Landslide Self-help Tips" on the CEDD's website (www.cedd.gov.hk/filemanager/eng/content_450/CEDD_Leaflet_2017_English.pdf).

Mr Pun specifically reminded private slope owners to arrange for inspection of their slopes and carry out necessary maintenance works, paying attention to safety, before the wet season. Depending on the type and condition of the slope, maintenance works may include the clearance of accumulated debris from drainage channels, unblocking of weep holes and outlet drainpipes, and repair of cracked or damaged slope surface cover.

Slope owners can refer to the leaflet Keep Your Slopes Safe on the CEDD's website

(www.cedd.gov.hk/filemanager/eng/content_450/keep_your_slope_safe_eng.pdf). Information on slope safety and individual slope in the Slope Catalogue can be obtained on the GEO's Hong Kong Slope Safety Website (hkss.cedd.gov.hk). For more detailed information or specific advice on slope maintenance matters, please contact the GEO's Community Advice Unit at 2760 5800 or by email at cau@cedd.gov.hk.

