

Speech by DCS at Racial Diversity and Inclusion Recruitment Fair (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing, at the Racial Diversity and Inclusion Recruitment Fair organised by the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Federation of Hong Kong Ethnic Communities in celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China and the 15th Anniversary of the Implementation of the Race Discrimination Ordinance at the Khalsa Diwan Hong Kong (Sikh Temple) in Wan Chai today (October 20):

Ms Linda Lam (Chairperson, Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)), Mr Akil Khan (President, Federation of Hong Kong Ethnic Communities), Mr Bhagt Singh (President, Sikh Temple), Dr Rizwan Ullah (EOC member), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. I am pleased to be joining you today for the opening of the Racial Diversity and Inclusion Recruitment Fair co-organised by the EOC and the Federation of Hong Kong Ethnic Communities (Federation).

Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan city with rich tapestry of people connections, vibrant economic activities and a flourishing multi-cultural scene, thanks in no small part to the some 300 000 ethnic minority residents who settled here for generations. It is evident from the latest Census figures (of 2021) that this treasured community continues to play an integral part in strengthening Hong Kong's workforce and driving our productivity: their labour force participation rate is at 65.5 per cent, which is higher than the 57.7 per cent of the whole population.

Today's recruitment fair is among the EOC's celebration events for the 15th anniversary of the implementation of the Race Discrimination Ordinance, a crucial piece of legislation driving Hong Kong's promotion of racial equality. Following the Racial Diversity and Inclusion Sports Day in April this year, I am excited to be here today to witness another milestone. This fair is also held in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. I trust that you have been enjoying the wide arrays of celebrating events and special offers over the past few weeks. With the new card-type Mainland travel permits for non-Chinese Hong Kong permanent residents, it has never been easier for many of you to visit the Mainland for business or pleasure, to see for yourself the spectacular transformation in the Mainland today.

Since its inauguration in 2018, the Federation of Hong Kong Ethnic Communities has been uniting and leveraging the support from various ethnic minority communities for greater and wider contributions to the betterment of Hong Kong. We thank the Federation's support all along in realising our

common vision for a harmonious and inclusive society.

The current-term Government places importance on enhancing support and services for ethnic minorities. As just announced in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address, the Government will engage one more "Support Service Centre for Ethnic Minorities" to provide interpretation and translation services for ethnic minorities next year, so as to reduce language barrier concerns. In terms of education, more resources will also be invested in boosting support for learning Chinese and parental assistance for our non-Chinese speaking students.

Of course, the Government's support for ethnic minorities does not stop there. As the largest employer in Hong Kong, over 50 civil service grades in the Government have adjusted their Chinese-language proficiency requirements to increase government job opportunities for ethnic minorities. Departments, including the disciplinary forces, are also encouraged to design their own job-oriented language tests suitable for individual grades to provide ethnic minority applicants with an additional avenue for meeting the thresholds. Since 2019, we have been organising an internship programme for non-ethnic Chinese university students and 180 students have since taken part.

In addition, the Racial Diversity Employment Programme launched by the Labour Department has been regularised in 2023 to step up employment support for ethnic minorities. To date, the Programme has provided employment support services to over 400 ethnic minority job-seekers.

Today's recruitment fair features prominent private enterprises in addition to a number of government departments, offering over 500 employment opportunities, including a wide range of skilled and professional positions, as well as on-the-spot career and employment counselling services. These job opportunities span across eleven signatories of the EOC's Racial Diversity and Inclusion Charter for Employers from different industries, including aviation, hospitality, education, transportation, and five government departments including our disciplinary forces.

In closing, my great thanks go to the EOC and the Federation for organising this meaningful recruitment fair, the Sikh Temple for the support rendered, and the representatives from different sectors who are here with us today, for your wholehearted efforts in creating opportunities for our ethnic minority community. I wish this recruitment fair great success and all of you an enjoyable weekend. Thank you very much.

