

Regional flag day today

Three charities have been issued Public Subscription Permits to hold flag sales from 7am to 12.30pm today (June 30). They are, on Hong Kong Island, A Drop of Life Limited; in Kowloon, the Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council; and in the New Territories, Tai Po Baptist Church, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

Arrangements have been made with the charities to help people distinguish between the three flag-selling activities.

Information on the three flag-selling organisations on June 30 is as follows:

Region	Name of Organisation	Colour of Collection Bag	Colour of Flag
Hong Kong Island	A Drop of Life Limited	Blue	White
Kowloon	The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council	Yellow	Orange
New Territories	Tai Po Baptist Church	Purple	Yellow

For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the Charitable Fund-raising Control Team at 2832 4311 during office hours. Information on the flag days of the month is available at the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_whatsnew/). Permits for flag days containing contact information of the flag-selling organisations and information on the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_recentlyap/). For enquiries about the detailed flag-selling arrangements, please contact the individual flag-selling organisations.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities covered by the Public Subscription Permit issued by the SWD have also been uploaded to the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/fundraising).

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.

Dead baby found case in Castle Peak reclassified as infanticide and concealing birth of child

Police today (June 30) reclassified a dead baby found case in Castle Peak yesterday afternoon (June 29) as infanticide and concealing birth of child.

About 5.40pm yesterday, Police received a report from a passer-by that a suspected dead baby was found outside the refuse collection point of Yau Oi Estate, Castle Peak. Police sped to the scene and found a newborn baby girl inside a plastic bag in a trolley. The baby girl was certified dead at scene.

Upon investigation, Police arrested a 28-year-old woman for infanticide, and her 43-year-old boyfriend for concealing birth of child, inside a unit of Yau Oi Estate in the small hours today. Initial investigation revealed that the woman suspectedly abandoned the baby girl after giving birth to her inside the unit of Yau Oi Estate yesterday.

The arrested man and woman are being detained for further enquiries.

Post-mortem examination will be conducted later to ascertain the cause of the baby's death.

Active investigation by District Crime Squad of Tuen Mun is underway.

Transcript of remarks at press conference on new initiatives on housing

â€‹ The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, together with the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan; the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan; and the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, held a press conference on new initiatives on housing this afternoon (June 29). Below is the transcript of remarks at the press conference:

Reporter: Three questions. Hong Kong's property prices have been increasing for 26 straight months as of May. Are these policies the Government's best try in providing immediate relief to unaffordable housing? Secondly,

regarding making subsidised housing more affordable, does the Government expect this policy will lead to increasing demand? The Government has been lagging in providing more subsidised housing to people, and people are deeming subsidised housing schemes as the big lottery. Does the Government have any plan to cope with even higher demand at this stage?

Chief Executive: First of all, as I've said at the outset, there is no objective in this package to suppress property prices, and I don't expect the society to measure the effectiveness of this package of measures by the trend in Hong Kong's private residential property prices. That's point number one. But of course I hope that we will not be seeing another upsurge in property prices, because that is really making private housing very unaffordable by the people of Hong Kong.

The second question is, yes, there has been a school of thought that when supply is lagging behind demand in terms of subsidised sale flats, why do you make these flats even more attractive and affordable? This is a chicken and egg question. The other concern I've heard in the past two months said: Why do I contribute to any discussion on land supply if more land supply doesn't mean I could buy the flat? The flats are unaffordable even in terms of Home Ownership Scheme. So I feel that the proper way is, let's have a very reasonable housing policy, let's assure the public that the houses or the flats that we are going to build will be affordable, at least in the subsidised sector. It will be affordable, because we have already delinked it from the private property prices and linked it with the household income. And with that, hopefully people will be more forthcoming in contributing their ideas and views to the land supply task force public consultation. We will work very hard on the land supply, and with the land we are very willing to build more. As you can see, we are reallocating some private housing sites for subsidised sale flats, and we now have a pricing policy which I hope will address once and for all the concerns of the people expressed to us in recent years.

Reporter: I want to ask as there are suggestions about, well, increasing for the vacancy tax. Instead of giving a flat rate, you should increase the tax according to the number of years that the developers are keeping the flats vacant – is that something that you are considering? And also, another suggestion of imposing a capital gains tax on non-permanent residents who are owning flats in Hong Kong. I mean, are these options that you are also considering? Have you considered these options to make better use of Hong Kong's housing resources? And also, you mentioned that these measures you introduced today are not for taming the property prices in Hong Kong, so do you have anything in mind that you're going to do, because we're seeing prices going up and up and up? Thank you.

Chief Executive: I'll answer the last point and then invite the Financial Secretary to address the two questions concerning taxes in Hong Kong. Well, the best solution to tackle rising property prices is supply. That's why I made a further appeal: please focus and participate in the ongoing public discussion on land supply. Without land supply, even if I were to make the HOS flats even cheaper, or free of charge, I just don't have land to build

these flats for the people. So the solution lies really in supply.

Financial Secretary: Thank you CE. As to the rate of additional rates, at the moment it is set at 200 per cent of rateable value, which can be translated into about 5 per cent of the property price. We consider that this is an adequate measure, but of course we keep an open mind. As you know, this bill will go through the Legislative Council, but at this stage we do think that 5 per cent of the property price, in the form of additional rates, is appropriate. As to your question about whether we should consider capital gains tax on foreign owners of Hong Kong property, currently we do not have that plan, but I won't rule out that possibility.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

HKETO in Wuhan hosts Reception for the 21st Anniversary of the Establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Wuhan (WHETO) today (June 29) held the Reception for the 21st Anniversary of the Establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in Wuhan, Hubei province. Around 150 guests attended the reception, including representatives from various government departments and authorities, consulates and related institutions, chambers of commerce and corporations in Hubei and Wuhan as well as Hong Kong people and students staying in Wuhan and representatives from Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Offices in Hunan, Henan, Jiangxi and Shanxi.

In his welcoming remarks, the Director of the WHETO, Mr Vincent Fung, said that since Hong Kong's return to the motherland 21 years ago, the socio-economic development of the HKSAR has been progressing steadily and firmly under the framework of the country's constitution and the Basic Law. Along with key national policies such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area development, Hong Kong will leverage its own advantages to perform the role of "super-connector" to contribute to the economic development of the country and Hong Kong, he added.

Thematic exhibitions on the Basic Law, the Belt and Road Initiative and various talent migrant admission scheme were also held at the reception so as to increase the participants' understanding on these matters.



Fatal traffic accident in Cheung Chau

Police are investigating a traffic accident in Cheung Chau this morning (June 29) in which a 57-year-old man died.

About 10.45am, a village vehicle driven by a 57-year-old man was travelling along Cheung Chau Sports Road towards Ming Fai Road. When approaching a hotel, it reportedly lost control and side-turned.

Sustaining serious head injuries, the driver was taken to Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital by helicopter where he was certified dead at 10.30pm.

Investigation by the Special Investigation Team of Traffic, Hong Kong Island is underway.

Anyone who witnessed the accident or has any information to offer is urged to contact the investigating officers at 3660 6838, 3660 6849 or 3660 6800.