

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (November 3) released the latest grading of water quality for nine gazetted beaches that are open for swimming in November.

Four beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1) and five as Fair (Grade 2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

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| Golden Beach | Repulse Bay Beach |
| Middle Bay Beach | St Stephen's Beach |

Grade 2 beaches are:

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|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Big Wave Bay Beach | Silver Mine Bay Beach |
| Clear Water Bay Second Beach | Silverstrand Beach |
| Deep Water Bay Beach | |

Compared with the grading released last week, Silver Mine Bay Beach has been upgraded from Grade 3 to Grade 2.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, an EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the Beach Water Quality Forecast mobile application (available for download from: www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQApp) or the dedicated beach water quality forecast page (www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast) on the EPD's beach thematic website.

Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum to hold fun day November 11 and 12

The Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum (SYSM) will hold a fun day next Saturday and Sunday (November 11 and 12). Offering a wide array of activities, the event aims to enable visitors to learn more about the museum as well as the revolutionary journey of Dr Sun Yat-sen. Members of the public are invited to participate and admission is free. The Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum Fun Day is one of the programmes of Muse Fest HK 2023.

The fun day will be held from 10am to 7pm. Apart from the copper plate pressing machine for participants to make commemorative coin, a storytelling workshop will be held at the museum to introduce the architectural features of Kom Tong Hall through a picture book, a musical performance and "Experiencing Traditional Chinese Juggling" for participants to learn more about the life and career of Dr Sun through Chinese music, dancing, a harmonica performance, etc, and engage in traditional Chinese juggling.

During the fun day, the museum will have a quiz game related to the life and career of Dr Sun. Visitors can search for answers in the permanent exhibition "Hong Kong in Dr Sun Yat-sen's Time" and "Dr Sun Yat-sen and Modern China" in exchange for a souvenir.

The SYSM, located at 7 Castle Road, Mid-Levels, Central, was originally the residence of local businessman Mr Ho Kom-tong. The Kom Tong Hall was built in 1914 and is one of the very few surviving structures in Hong Kong dating back to the early 20th century. The building is crafted with grand interior decorations, colourful stained-glass windows and teak wood staircase railings. This building's facade is surrounded by Greek-style granite columns, and the balcony wall tiles on each floor have their own style. The Kom Tong Hall has been listed as a declared monument in Hong Kong since 2010.

For details of the fun day, please visit the website at hk.drsunyatsen.museum/en/web/sysm/activities.html#fun-day-2023, or call 3580 6780.

Advisory Committee on Countryside Conservation approves new Countryside

Conservation Funding Scheme projects

The Secretariat of the Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme (CCFS) announced today (November 3) that the Advisory Committee on Countryside Conservation (ACCC) has approved new CCFS projects involving a total grant of around \$27 million.

The newly approved projects are the Nature Conservation Management Agreement (MA) project in Ho Sheung Heung (HSH) and the Proactive Conservation (PC) project in Sha Lo Tung (SLT). The MA project aims at sustaining the conservation outcome accumulated, and continuing the enhanced collaboration with local farmers in agricultural activities, in order to maintain the freshwater wetland of HSH as a favourable ecological habitat for the stopover and perching of birds, amphibians and freshwater fishes. The PC project, initiated by the Countryside Conservation Office (CCO) in collaboration with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, targets to conserve the biodiversity of SLT through proactive conservation work and pave the way for the implementation of the long-term conservation strategy of SLT. The PC project will be conducted by a local non-profit-making organisation (NPO) to be engaged through the established procurement and tendering procedures of the Government. Tendering details will be announced separately.

To enhance the transparency of the CCFS and the outcome of the conservation projects, the ACCC has also agreed to refine the guide to the application of the CCFS to clearly stipulate the responsibilities and funding limit of the project organisation. The amendments cover, amongst others, the requirement on dissemination of project information and the outcome for public sharing, the accumulated funding limit for any single project organisation at the same time and the introduction of an e-form to facilitate application.

To help revitalise countryside villages and support eco-tourism, the review of the refinement of the licensing regime for guesthouses and food businesses in the countryside, conducted by the Government's interdepartmental task force, is close to completion. The CCO will summarise the facilitation measures and prepare the relevant licensing requirements and procedural guidelines with a view to facilitating licensing applications for countryside areas. The guidelines are expected to be completed and promulgated in 2023/24.

So far, a total of 45 projects involving a total amount of around \$236 million have been approved under the eight rounds of CCFS applications conducted, supporting local NPOs' work in promoting conservation and revitalisation in different aspects, such as natural environment/habitats, non-graded built heritage, cultural and historic assets. All CCFS applications are examined and considered by the ACCC, which is chaired by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology. Details of the approved projects are available on the CCFS webpage

Postal services to Thailand return to normal

Hongkong Post announced today (November 3) that, as advised by the postal administration of Thailand, mail delivery services previously impacted by flooding have returned to normal.

HKSAR Government strongly condemns US Lawmakers' despicable attempt to intimidate HKSAR personnel safeguarding national security

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) today (November 3) strongly condemned those United States (US) lawmakers requesting a review, through a so-called "bill", of including the Secretary for Justice, the Secretary General of the Committee for Safeguarding National Security of the HKSAR, the Commissioner of Police, and a number of judges and prosecutors, in a so-called list of "sanctions" in an attempt to intimidate the HKSAR personnel concerned who safeguard national security.

A spokesman for the HKSAR Government said, "It is clear that safeguarding national security falls within the internal affairs of a sovereign jurisdiction, so the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL) is free from any intervention. While the 'black-clad violence' and the Hong Kong version of 'colour revolution' back in 2019 severely damaged the social stability of Hong Kong, the successful implementation of the NSL has enabled the livelihood and economic activities of the Hong Kong community at large to swiftly resume as normal and the business environment to be restored. However, those US politicians insist on turning a blind eye to all these facts, and even clamour for so-called 'sanctions' against the HKSAR personnel who dutifully safeguard national security. The HKSAR Government strongly condemns their political grandstanding rife with ill intentions, which have been seen through by all.

"The HKSAR despises any so-called 'sanctions' and shall never be

intimidated. It shall continue to resolutely discharge the responsibility of safeguarding national security. The HKSAR Government strongly urges the US politicians concerned to discern facts from fallacies, and immediately stop acting against the international law and basic norms of international relations and interfering in Hong Kong matters, which are purely China's internal affairs."

The spokesman pointed out, "Over the past three years or so of implementation of the NSL, the HKSAR has been fulfilling the responsibility of safeguarding national security in accordance with the law and earnestly upholding the principle that laws must be obeyed and lawbreakers held accountable. When discharging duties under the NSL, the HKSAR law enforcement agencies take law enforcement actions, based on evidence and strictly in accordance with the law, against any people, institutions or organisations that endanger national security. The Department of Justice of the HKSAR is in charge of criminal prosecutions under Article 63 of the Basic Law, with all prosecution decisions made based on an objective analysis of all admissible evidence and applicable laws.

"The Judiciary of the HKSAR exercises judicial power independently in accordance with the law, and everyone charged with a criminal offence has the right to a fair hearing. The courts decide cases strictly in accordance with the evidence and all applicable laws. Cases will never be handled any differently owing to the profession, political beliefs or background of the entities involved. The prosecution has the burden to prove beyond reasonable doubt the commission of an offence before a defendant may be convicted by the court.

"The judicial system of the HKSAR has always been highly regarded by international communities. Any attempt by any country, organisation, or individual to interfere with the judicial proceedings in the HKSAR by means of political power is a reprehensible act undermining the rule of law of the HKSAR. Making any statement with the intent to interfere with or obstruct the course of justice, or engaging in conduct with the same intent, is very likely to constitute the offence of criminal contempt of court or the offence of perverting the course of justice."

The spokesman reiterated, "The HKSAR steadfastly safeguards national sovereignty, security and development interests, and fully and faithfully lives up to this top priority of the principle of 'one country, two systems'. The HKSAR Government shall resolutely, fully and faithfully implement the NSL and further strengthen the HKSAR's legal system and enforcement mechanisms for safeguarding national security to effectively prevent, suppress and punish in accordance with the law acts and activities that endanger national security. At the same time, it shall safeguard the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people in accordance with the law. Its overarching goal is to ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of 'one country, two systems'."