

Public urged to report flooding

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

Members of the public are advised to report any street flooding that comes to their notice to the Drainage Services Department by calling the 24-hour drainage hotline on 2300 1110.

Employers, contractors and employees should be aware of electrical safety at work during rainstorm

As the rainstorm warning has been issued by the Hong Kong Observatory, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and contractors that they should adopt necessary work arrangements and take suitable safety measures to protect the safety of their employees when they are carrying out electrical work or handling electrical plant.

A spokesman for the LD said today (May 21) that employers and contractors should avoid assigning employees to carry out electrical work (like electric arc welding work) or handle electrical plant at places affected by rainstorms, and should refer to the "Code of Practice in times of Typhoons and Rainstorms" and the "Guide on Safety at Work in times of Inclement Weather" issued by the LD.

Even if electrical work is carried out or electrical plant is handled at places not affected by the rainstorm, suitable safety measures must still be adopted to prevent electric shock as the air would be more humid. Such measures include:

(i) Ensure that all live parts of an electrical installation are isolated from the power supply source and rendered dead, and the isolation from the power supply source must be maintained as long as electrical work is being carried out;

(ii) Before carrying out any electrical work or handling any electrical plant, cut off and lock out the power supply source, then test the circuit concerned to confirm it is dead and display suitable warning notices, and issue a work permit thereafter;

(iii) Ensure that protective devices (such as suitable and adequate fuses and circuit breakers) for the electrical installations or electrical plant have been installed and maintained in good working order, and portable electric tools must be double-insulated or properly earthed;

(iv) Provide suitable personal protective equipment such as insulating gloves and insulating mats for employees; and

(v) If live electrical work is unavoidable, a comprehensive risk assessment should be conducted by a competent person and the appropriate safety precautions should be taken to remove or properly control the electrical hazards involved before such work can proceed.

In addition, employees should co-operate with the employer or contractor to follow the safety instructions and use the safety equipment provided.

The LD has published guidebooks and leaflets on electrical work safety. These safety publications are available free from divisional offices of the department or can be downloaded from its website (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_8.htm).

Should there be any questions about occupational safety and health matters, please contact the Occupational Safety Officer of the LD at 2559 2297.

Flag-raising ceremony cancelled

Owing to the thunderstorm warning, the flag-raising ceremony to be conducted at Golden Bauhinia Square, Wan Chai at 8am today (May 21) will be cancelled.

If the thunderstorm warning is cancelled and weather conditions permit by then, the flag-raising ceremony may be resumed without further notice.

HKSAR Government strongly condemns slanders, smears and divisive act by anti-China organisation “Hong Kong Watch” regarding Basic Law Article 23

Legislation

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government on May 20 strongly condemned the "briefing" published by anti-China organisation "Hong Kong Watch", which made untruthful, slandering and smearing remarks against the legislation of Article 23 of the Basic Law and requested the Government of the United Kingdom (UK) to impose so-called "sanctions" on HKSAR Government officials, deliberately misleading the public and smearing the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL) and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (the Ordinance).

A spokesman for the HKSAR Government said, "The so-called 'sanctions' mentioned in the 'briefing' smack of despicable political manipulation to intimidate the HKSAR officials safeguarding national security. These grossly interfere in China's internal affairs and Hong Kong affairs, and violate the international law and the basic norms governing international relations. The HKSAR despises such so-called 'sanctions' and is not intimidated by such a despicable behaviour. The HKSAR will resolutely continue to discharge the duty of safeguarding national security."

The HKSAR Government spokesman said, "The HKSAR is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China, and as a local administrative region that enjoys a high degree of autonomy under the principle of 'one country, two systems', comes directly under the jurisdiction of the Central People's Government. The core essence of the Sino-British Joint Declaration is about China's resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong. It did not authorise the UK to interfere in Hong Kong's affairs after its return to the motherland. The UK has no sovereignty, jurisdiction or right of supervision over Hong Kong after its return to the motherland."

The spokesman also said, "The HKSAR Government steadfastly safeguards the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people as protected under the law. Since Hong Kong's return to the motherland, human rights in the city have always been robustly guaranteed constitutionally by both the Constitution and the Basic Law. The NSL and the Ordinance also clearly stipulate that human rights shall be respected and protected in safeguarding national security in the HKSAR, and that the rights and freedoms, including the freedoms of speech, of the press, of publication, of association, of assembly, of procession and of demonstration, that Hong Kong residents enjoy under the Basic Law and the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applied to Hong Kong, shall be protected in accordance with the law. Nonetheless, just as the case with other places in the world, such rights and freedoms are not absolute. The ICCPR also expressly states that some of them may be subject to restrictions as prescribed by law that are necessary for protection of national security, public safety, public order or the rights and freedoms of others, etc."

"Following the successful enactment of the Ordinance, the shortcomings in the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard

national security are addressed. We must once again emphasise that the Ordinance is a piece of legislation to defend against external forces that endanger our national security, acting like a sturdier door and a more effective door lock to defend our home. The HKSAR Government strongly urges these organisations with ulterior motives to stop smearing and interfering in Hong Kong affairs which are internal affairs of China. It is incumbent upon these organisations to ensure that their remarks concerning the NSL and the Ordinance are fair and just, and stop making scaremongering remarks.

"We must also point out that the HKSAR law enforcement agencies have been taking law enforcement actions based on evidence and strictly in accordance with the law in respect of the acts of the persons or entities concerned, paying no regard to their political stance, background or occupation.

"Not only is 'Hong Kong Watch' an anti-China organisation, many of its members are also anti-China and destabilising forces in the front line, who have called for so-called 'sanctions' by foreign countries against officials of the Central People's Government and the HKSAR Government repeatedly. Members of the public in Hong Kong and the international community should see the organisation in its true colours and not to be misled by its skewed remarks with ulterior motives. The HKSAR Government will continue to safeguard national security fearlessly, so that the HKSAR can focus its efforts on developing the economy, improving people's livelihood and maintaining the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong."

Fatal traffic accident in Mong Kok

Police are investigating a fatal traffic accident happened in Mong Kok this afternoon (May 20) in which a woman died.

At 4.50pm, a medium goods vehicle (MGV) driven by a 54-year-old man was travelling along Sai Yee Street towards Argyle Street. Upon approaching 59 Sai Yee Street, it reportedly knocked down an 82-year-old woman who was crossing the road.

The woman was trapped under the MGV and rescued by firemen. Sustaining multiple injuries, the woman was rushed to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in unconscious state and was certified dead at 6.05pm.

The driver was arrested for dangerous driving causing death and is being detained for enquiries.

Investigation by the Special Investigation Team of Traffic, Kowloon West is underway.

Anyone who witnessed the accident or has any information to offer is

urged to contact the investigating officers on 3661 9062.