

MARK SIX

There were no winners of the first or second prize in last night's draw. The numbers were 18, 25, 38, 40, 44 and 45. The extra number was 5. Third prize paid HK\$126,930. HK\$38,000,000 will jackpot to Tuesday's draw.

... which welcomed 13,000 members of the public to its Ngong Shuen Chau naval base on Stonecutters Island yesterday.

While the event to mark the 85th anniversary of the PLA's foundation had many of the trappings of previous open days – including marches, military music and martial arts shows – there was also new weaponry on display.

... and sit on military motorcycles under the supervision of PLA soldiers. But those in search of a souvenir were given strict warning against collecting used bullet cartridges after a shooting display by the troops.

Victor Man Kwun-ho, 15, who last visited the barracks when he was 10, enjoyed the performances and the exhibition of military equipment.

"The weapons seem to be more

6,000

The number of PLA soldiers, sailors and airmen based in Hong Kong. They are confined to 18 PLA barracks across the city

... city late last month to mark the 15th anniversary of the handover.

One of his first duties was to review a military parade at the Shek Kong barracks.

The PLA open days have become a regular event in recent years, with 24 events held so far at bases for the navy and air force, as well as army barracks. Almost 500,000 people have visited the events.

ENVIRONMENT

DB residents urged to help clear pellets

Lana Lam

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Discovery Bay has been left with an unwanted reminder of Typhoon Vicente in the form of millions of raw plastic pellets blown off a ship.

As the city cleans up in the aftermath of the strongest typhoon to hit since 1999, an environmental group in Discovery Bay is calling on residents to help remove the potentially toxic plastic pellets that are strewn along the Lantau Island coastline.

The ship lost part of its cargo as it passed south of Lamma Island at the height of Monday's storm.

"This is definitely an ecological disaster because it's the equivalent of an oil spill," said Tracey Read, who has organised regular beach clean-ups for the past six years.

More than 250 sacks of the pellets – about 100 of them empty – have been found since Read first spotted about 30 bags of pellets along Sam Pak Wan Beach on Wednesday. Each 25kg sack is estimated to carry about a million pellets.

"The pellets are inert but once they get into the sea, they act like a sponge and absorb toxic chemicals," Read said. "So you can have a pellet that contains many more times the chemicals than in the surrounding water."

She said fish would eat the pellets as they resembled fish eggs. As smaller fish were eaten by bigger ones, the toxins could make their way up the food chain.

"You get a bio-accumulation which magnifies up the food chain, so it's harmful for the fish and potentially, very harmful for us," she said.

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department said it had finished its clean-up yesterday, having collected about 4.8 tonnes of plastic pellets from Sam Pak Wan beach.

Read said the government had acted quickly and helped clean up many of the bags, but more hands were needed. "We just need to get people to the beaches and clean up the pellets before they get washed out to sea," she said.

Gary Stokes, who started the Hong Kong chapter of Sea Shepherd, an international marine conservation body, said since the initial discovery of the pellets in Discovery Bay, more pellets had been found in Shek O and Mui Wo.

"I don't think we've seen the full magnitude of this," Stokes said.

Three 40ft containers blown off



"This is definitely an ecological disaster because it's the equivalent of an oil spill"

TRACEY READ, ENVIRONMENTALIST

the vessel had been recovered and were now in a Tsing Yi storage facility, he said.

Two of the containers were damaged and found with their doors open and several hundred bags of pellets still inside. The third container was intact.

The pellets were produced by Sinopec's petrochemical refinery in Hainan, but it is not known who they belonged to.

Stokes said Sinopec representatives visited the affected beaches on Friday and had noted the batch numbers of the sacks so they could trace who bought the pellets.

But for now, the priority was to clean up as many of the pellets as possible, he said.

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