

Red flag hoisted at Big Wave Bay Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (June 4) that due to inclement weather, the sandy area of Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island, has become uneven and is not suitable for swimming. The red flag has been hoisted and the beach has been closed until further notice. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, June 4, 2019 is 105.2 (down 0.3 against yesterday's index).

A gloomy and cooler May

With more than usual moisture content in the lower atmosphere over southern China, May 2019 was gloomier than usual in Hong Kong. The mean amount of cloud in this month was 83 per cent, 7 percentage points above the normal figure of 76 per cent. The duration of bright sunshine in the month was only 83.1 hours, about 41 per cent lower than the normal figure of 140.4 hours and the second lowest on record for May. With less sunshine and the prevalence of the cooler easterlies in early May, the monthly mean temperature was 25.3 degrees, 0.6 degrees below the normal figure of 25.9 degrees. Although the month was cooler than normal, the spring of Hong Kong in 2019 was still much warmer than usual due to the well above normal temperatures in March and April. The mean temperature from March to May was 23.7 degrees, 1.2 degrees above the normal figure and the fifth highest on record for the same period. The monthly rainfall was 234.6 millimetres, about 23 per cent below the normal figure of 304.7 millimetres. The accumulated rainfall recorded in the first five months of the year was 680.3 millimetres, about 6 per cent above the normal figure of 640.8 millimetres for the same period.

With the thinning out of the cloud band covering the coast of Guangdong,

the weather in Hong Kong was mainly cloudy with sunny intervals during the day on May 1. The weather became relatively cooler from May 2 to 8 under the showery weather and the influence of a fresh to strong easterly airstream. The weather turned more unsettled with heavy showers and squally thunderstorms on May 7 and 8 due to the passage of an upper-air disturbance over southern China. Over 40 millimetres of rainfall was recorded over parts of the territory on these two days. The temperature at the Hong Kong Observatory dropped to a minimum of 18.9 degrees on May 7, the lowest of the month.

With the departure of the upper-air disturbance, showers lessened with sunny intervals and rising temperatures on May 9 and 10. Under the influence of a drier easterly airstream, local weather became generally fine and hot on May 11 and 12. After a cloudy interlude on May 13, apart from a few isolated showers, it was hot with sunny periods from May 14 to 19 under the prevalence of the southwesterlies. There were also fog patches from May 14 to 16. With plenty of sunshine, the maximum temperature at the Hong Kong Observatory soared to 32.3 degrees in the afternoon on May 18 and 19, the highest of the month. The daily minimum temperature of 29.2 degrees recorded on May 19 at the Hong Kong Observatory was the highest on record for May.

Under the influence of a trough of low pressure lingering over the south China coast, the weather in Hong Kong deteriorated again with occasional heavy showers and squally thunderstorms from May 20 to 23. Affected by an easterly airstream over the coast of Guangdong, it was mainly cloudy with some showers on May 24 and 25.

With an unstable southerly airstream replacing the easterly airstream over the coast of Guangdong, there were heavy showers and squally thunderstorms in Hong Kong on May 26. Around 20 millimetres of rainfall was recorded over most parts of the territory on that day and the rainfall over the western part of the New Territories even exceeded 40 millimetres. Unsettled weather associated with a trough of low pressure over the coastal areas of Guangdong affected the region on May 27 and 28. Locally, outbreaks of heavy showers and squally thunderstorms brought more than 60 millimetres of rainfall to most parts of the territory on these two days. Rainfall even exceeded 120 millimetres over Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and Lantau Island. With the trough of low pressure lingering over the coastal areas of Guangdong, the weather in Hong Kong remained showery with isolated thunderstorms on the last three days of the month.

There was no tropical cyclone over the South China Sea and the western North Pacific in May 2019.

Details of issuance and cancellation of various warnings/signals in May are summarised in Table 1. Monthly meteorological figures and departures from normal for May are tabulated in Table 2.

Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Happy Valley tomorrow

Special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Happy Valley tomorrow (June 5). The arrangements will come into effect one and a half hours before the start of the first race and will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

A. Traffic arrangements before the commencement of the first race

1. Road closure

Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp outside Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) will be closed except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel.

2. Traffic diversions

- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the up-ramp outside HKJC will be re-routed one way northbound;
- Vehicles from eastbound Queen's Road East heading for Wan Chai and Happy Valley will be diverted to turn left to Morrison Hill Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along Queen's Road East cannot turn right to Wong Nai Chung Road except for vehicles heading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Queen's Road East will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Morrison Hill Road to turn right at the junction of Wong Nai Chung Road and Queen's Road East; and
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley or Racecourse will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, southbound Morrison Hill Road, Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road.

B. Traffic arrangements before the conclusion of race meeting

1. Road closure

The following roads will be closed from 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- The up-ramp on Wong Nai Chung Road outside HKJC leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the Public Stands of HKJC;
- Westbound Leighton Road between Wong Nai Chung Road and Canal Road East; and

- Southbound Morrison Hill Road between Leighton Road and Queen's Road East.

In addition, southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel and the Public Stands of HKJC will be closed from about 10 minutes before the start of the last race.

2. Traffic diversions

The following traffic arrangements will be implemented from 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- Eastbound Queen's Road East at its junction with Morrison Hill Road will be reduced to one-lane traffic heading for northbound Canal Road flyover;
- Vehicles from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Wan Chai will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from Canal Road East, U-turn slip road beneath Canal Road flyover, Canal Road West and Hennessy Road;
- Vehicles from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from Canal Road East, eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic on southbound Morrison Hill Road will be diverted to turn left to eastbound Leighton Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road; and
- Traffic along westbound Leighton Road will be diverted to Wong Nai Chung Road.

C. Learner drivers prohibition

Learner drivers will be prohibited to turn left from Caroline Hill Road to Leighton Road between one and a half hours before the start of the first race and one hour after the last race. In addition, learner drivers will be prohibited from accessing the following roads within the above period of time:

- Shan Kwong Road between Yik Yam Street and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Village Road between its upper and lower junctions with Shan Kwong Road;
- Percival Street between Hennessy Road and Leighton Road;
- Canal Road East; and
- The service road leading from Gloucester Road to Canal Road flyover.

D. Suspension of parking spaces

Parking spaces on southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Sports Road and Blue Pool Road will be suspended from 11am to 7pm during day racing, from 4.30pm to 11.59pm during evening racing, and from 5pm to 11.59pm during night racing.

Any vehicles found illegally parked within the precincts of the above affected areas will be towed away without prior notice.

Actual implementation of road closure and traffic diversion will be made by the Police at the time depending on traffic conditions in the areas. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience, and follow the instructions

of Police on site.

Land Registry releases statistics for May

The Land Registry today (June 4) released its statistics for May 2019.

Land registration

- * The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in May was 10,353 (+4.5 per cent compared with April 2019 and +32.9 per cent compared with May 2018)
- * The 12-month moving average for May was 6,571 (3.4 per cent above the 12-month moving average for April 2019 and 8.8 per cent below that for May 2018)
- * The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in May was \$90.3 billion (+3.9 per cent compared with April 2019 and +42.3 per cent compared with May 2018)
- * Among the sale and purchase agreements, 8,208 were for residential units (+4.9 per cent compared with April 2019 and +48.6 per cent compared with May 2018)
- * The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$78.4 billion (+11.9 per cent compared with April 2019 and +50.3 per cent compared with May 2018)

Statistics on sales of residential units do not include sale and purchase agreements relating to sales of units under the Home Ownership Scheme, the Private Sector Participation Scheme and the Tenants Purchase Scheme unless the premium of the unit concerned has been paid after the sale restriction period.

Figures on sale and purchase agreements received for the past 12 months, the year-on-year rate of change and breakdown figures on residential sales have also been released.

As deeds may not be lodged with the Land Registry until up to 30 days after the transaction, these statistics generally relate to land transactions in the previous month.

Land search

* The number of searches of land registers made by the public in May was 497,510 (+11.9 per cent compared with April 2019 and -1.0 per cent compared with May 2018)

The statistics cover searches made at the counter, through the self-service terminals and via the Integrated Registration Information System Online Services.