

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, May 27, 2019 is 105.2 (down 0.1 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, May 25, 2019 was 105.3 (down 0.1 against last Friday's index).

Opening ceremony for "Construction of Lift Tower at Shung Yan Street in Kwun Tong" under Kwun Tong District Signature Project Scheme held today

An opening ceremony for the "Construction of Lift Tower at Shung Yan Street in Kwun Tong" (the Project) under the Kwun Tong District Signature Project Scheme (SPS) was held at Hong Ning Road Recreation Ground, Kwun Tong today (May 27).

Under the SPS, a provision of \$100 million has been earmarked for each district council to implement signature projects selected by the District Council, so as to better address local needs. The Kwun Tong District Council (KTDC) decided to take forward two projects, one of which is the construction of a lift tower at Shung Yan Street.

The project includes the construction of a lift tower with two passenger lift cars and a link bridge connecting Hong Ning Road Recreation Ground and Shung Yan Street, upgrading works for the adjacent barrier-free access provisions and refurbishment of some leisure facilities in Hong Ning Road Recreation Ground, thereby helping residents to get around the town centre.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, said the Project provides residents with a barrier-free access walkway, bringing convenience to the elderly and people with disabilities, while the renovated and enhanced Hong Ning Road Recreation Ground also provides a more comfortable leisure area for public enjoyment. He said he was delighted that the KTDC fully addresses district needs and introduces projects for the benefit of the public.

Other officiating guests of the ceremony included the Chairman of the KTDC, Dr Bunny Chan; the Director of Home Affairs, Miss Janice Tse; the Director of Architectural Services, Mrs Sylvia Lam; Assistant Director of

Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services) Mrs Doris Fok; the District Officer (Kwun Tong), Mr Steve Tse; and the Vice Chairman of the KTDC, Mr Hung Kam-in.

ExCo Non-official Members visit transitional housing projects (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Executive Council Secretariat:

Non-official Members of the Executive Council (ExCo Members) today (May 27) visited the Sham Tseng Light Housing and transitional housing units under the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS)'s Community Housing Movement to keep abreast of the latest progress of Hong Kong's transitional housing projects.

Accompanied by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, and the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Light Be, Mr Ricky Yu, ExCo Members first visited the Sham Tseng Light Housing and its residents to learn about their living environment and daily lives. The Light Housing, converted by social enterprise Light Be from the staff quarters of a mill factory, provides more than 40 units of rental housing for a maximum of three years with affordable rent to families in need. Light Housing's "Tenant Development" model emphasises a diversified approach to personal development.

ExCo Members then proceeded to the transitional housing project Good Homes, established in To Kwa Wan under the Community Housing Movement, and visited resident families in the company of the HKCSS Chief Executive, Mr Chua Hoi-wai. With the Government's support, the HKCSS rolled out the Community Housing Movement to provide transitional housing using existing vacant units in residential buildings to alleviate the hardship faced by families awaiting public rental housing, as well as those in poor living conditions. Assisted by the joint efforts of various sectors of the community, the project also provides support services for residents in need. Run by the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council, Good Homes emphasises the concept of "shared, co-managed and symbiotic" housing to promote a friendly community culture while alleviating the housing needs of inadequately accommodated households.

The ExCo Members agreed that transitional housing projects are worth supporting as community resources can be used flexibly to provide accommodation for people with housing needs, and many such projects also help improve residents' living standard through appropriate counselling services and support. They expressed the hope that the approval by the Chief Executive

in Council earlier to exempt the waiver fee, rent and associated costs for land applications related to the provision of transitional housing will encourage more community-initiated transitional housing projects to alleviate the hardship faced by families awaiting public rental housing or inadequately housed.

The ExCo Non-official Members joining the visit today were Convenor Mr Bernard Chan, Mrs Fanny Law, Mr Ronny Tong, Dr Lam Ching-choi and Mr Kenneth Lau.



[Illegal worker jailed](#)

A Pakistani illegal worker holding a recognisance form was jailed at Shatin Magistrates' Courts on May 25.

Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators received a referral from the Hong Kong Police Force to further investigate an illegal employment case this month. Enforcement officers arrested a male Pakistani worker, aged 27, conveying goods in Sha Tin. Upon identity checking, he was found to be a holder of a recognisance form issued by ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment, and further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts on May 25 with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. He pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase, and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

Two renovation works contractors convicted for illegally carrying out renovation works at night and on holidays

Two renovation works contractors were convicted on May 20 and today (May 27) at the Eastern Magistrates' Courts for contravening the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO) by illegally using powered mechanical equipment to carry out renovation works at night and on holidays. The two contractors were fined a total of \$13,000.

A spokesperson for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said that through following up on a video provided by a member of the public in December last year, the department confirmed that the renovation works contractor of a ground floor shop of a residential building on Lyndhurst Terrace in Central, Wing Keung Contracting and Engineering Company Limited, used an electric breaker to carry out demolition works on a holiday, causing noise disturbance to nearby residents. Furthermore, during a blitz inspection in Wan Chai in November last year, the department found that the renovation works contractor of a shop at Lee Garden Two, East Joint Designs Limited, generated noise by using an electric grinder to carry out polishing procedures at 10.30pm. The two renovation works companies were not granted a construction noise permit (CNP) before the commencement of the relevant works. After completing investigations and gathering evidence, the EPD prosecuted the two renovation works contractors under the NCO.

The spokesperson explained that the NCO aims to protect the public from disturbance of their rest. Contractors should arrange for renovation works to be carried out during the daytime and non-holidays as far as possible with a view to minimising noise disturbance to residents nearby. If any works procedures have to be conducted during the restricted hours (between 7pm and 7am on the following day, or at any time on a general holiday), a permit must be obtained from the EPD in advance. The construction works shall commence only when the CNP has been granted upon completion of assessment to support its compliance with regulatory requirements. The construction works granted a permit must also strictly comply with the relevant requirements of the CNP, only specified powered mechanical equipment can be used for the construction works and noise mitigation measures should be implemented, including the erection of fences and noise barriers at the sites. Otherwise, it constitutes an offence. Under the NCO, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$200,000 may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.