

Government strengthens support for construction sector under second round of Anti-epidemic Fund

The Development Bureau (DEVB) announced today (June 11) that the Anti-epidemic Fund will provide further support to the construction sector.

The construction sector has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the latest unemployment rate escalating to 10 per cent. The second round of the Anti-epidemic Fund will strengthen the support for the sector by offering a one-off subsidy to employers in the sector who have employed casual employees on a long-term basis, in order to supplement the scope not covered by the Employment Support Scheme (ESS).

"Under the new measure, if an employer in the construction sector has made contributions for a 'casual employee' under the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) Industry Schemes for at least 15 days in the calendar month of March this year, the employee will be regarded as a 'qualified employee'. An employer may apply for a subsidy of \$36,000 per 'qualified employee'. Applicants have to undertake not to make their employees redundant for a period of six months on receipt of the subsidy and to spend the full amount of the subsidy on paying wages to their workers. Currently, there are some 40 000 'casual employees' being employed on a long-term basis in the sector and we expect that the measure will benefit about 3 500 employers, helping them and their workers tide over the current difficulties," a spokesman for the DEVB said.

The Construction Industry Council will handle applications and disburse the subsidies for the Government and will announce the details by late June.

Meanwhile, employers who wish to apply for wage subsidies under the ESS for their "regular employees" or employees aged 65 or above under their MPF schemes should do so before the deadline for the first tranche of subsidies (i.e. June 14). For details, please refer to the ESS website (www.ess.gov.hk).

The Government has launched two rounds of Anti-epidemic Fund so far. As of yesterday (June 10), a total of more than \$3.1 billion in subsidies had been disbursed to some 310 000 construction workers and some 10 000 construction-related enterprises.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, June 11, 2020 is 107.6 (up 0.1 against yesterday's index).

Partial solar eclipse in Hong Kong on June 21

An annular solar eclipse, with the solar eclipse zone stretching across Asia and Africa, will occur on June 21 (Sunday), but it will be visible as a partial solar eclipse in Hong Kong. As the elevation of the sun will be rather high during the eclipse, the event can be best observed at places with an unobstructed view towards the west if weather permits.

The eclipse will begin at 2.37pm and end at 5.25pm, with the maximum eclipse occurring at 4.08pm. The path of the sun and the moon during this partial solar eclipse is indicated in the Annex.

Details of this partial solar eclipse are set out in the following table:

Time	Phenomenon	Elevation	Direction (Azimuth)
2.37pm	Eclipse begins	60 degrees	West (279 degrees)
4.08pm	Maximum eclipse	39 degrees	West-northwest (283 degrees)
5.25pm	Eclipse ends	22 degrees	West-northwest (287 degrees)

During this solar eclipse, Hong Kong will be close to the path of annularity. The magnitude of the eclipse will be 0.89, meaning that 89 per cent of the sun's diameter will be obscured by the moon at the maximum eclipse. This is the solar eclipse with the largest magnitude visible since 2012, and a solar eclipse with an even larger magnitude will not occur until 2070.

To avoid severe eye damage, members of the public should never look directly at the sun with the naked eye nor through a telescope. A safer method is to project the sun's image through a pinhole or a telescope onto a piece of white paper or cardboard and view the projected image. An

illustration of the method is given on the website of the Hong Kong Observatory: www.hko.gov.hk/en/gts/event/event-solar-eclps16.htm.

Members of the public can watch the whole event via a webcast to be jointly provided by the Hong Kong Observatory, the Hong Kong Space Museum, the Ho Koon Nature Education cum Astronomical Centre (sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen), Po Leung Kuk Ngan Po Ling College and the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Solar Tower's Camp on the following webpage: www.hko.gov.hk/en/gts/event/webcast-20200621.htm.

For the latest weather conditions and the astronomical observation conditions on June 21, please refer to the nine-day weather forecast issued by the Hong Kong Observatory (www.hko.gov.hk/en/wxinfo/currwx/fnd.htm) and the Weather Information for Astronomical Observation webpage (www.hko.gov.hk/en/gts/astronomy/astro_portal.html).

A detailed explanation of the technical terms used for different stages of the eclipse and past solar eclipses observable in Hong Kong are also available at the Hong Kong Observatory's webpage: www.hko.gov.hk/en/gts/event/event-solar-eclps1.htm.

The next solar eclipse visible in Hong Kong will be on April 20, 2023, which will only be barely observable.

Fraudulent website related to ZA Bank Limited

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by ZA Bank Limited on fraudulent website, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on [the HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the website concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the website should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

Fraudulent website and phishing email related to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited on fraudulent website and phishing email, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the website concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the website should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.