

## SCS inspects gradually resumed public services (with photos)

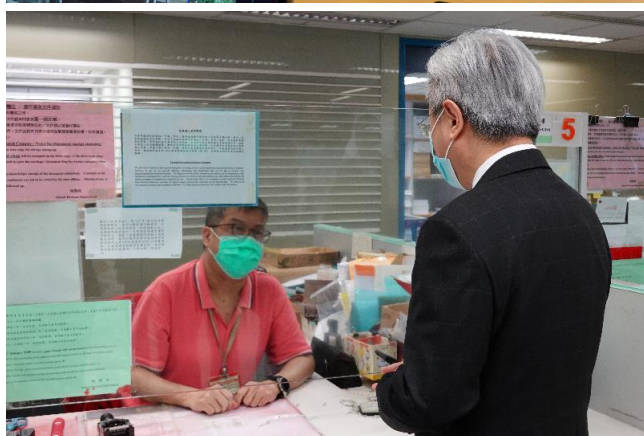
The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, visited Hong Kong Central Library and Hong Kong Park Sports Centre today (March 10) to learn more about the preparations made by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) to re-open some indoor leisure venues and cultural facilities tomorrow (March 11). He also inspected the counter services of the Transport Department (TD) Licensing Office and the Inland Revenue Department (IRD) to better understand the work of front-line colleagues amid the COVID-19 epidemic.

Mr Law first visited Hong Kong Central Library, where he was briefed by the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Mr Vincent Liu, about the department's measures to avoid people gathering at public libraries, which will be partially reopened tomorrow. These measures include arranging admission by sessions and distributing admission slips on a first-come, first-served basis for entry.

Accompanied by Mr Liu, Mr Law also visited Hong Kong Park Sports Centre to learn more about the special measures adopted by the LCSD at the sport facilities, which will be reopened tomorrow, to avoid people gathering and to foster social distancing, such as limiting the number of users.

Later at Revenue Tower, Mr Law was briefed by the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, Mr Wong Kuen-fai, on the IRD's resumption of normal public services after implementing infection controls and social distancing measures. Mr Law also inspected the counter service of the TD's Licensing Office in Admiralty. He learned from the Commissioner for Transport, Ms Mable Chan, that the Licensing Offices have further increased the quota for online appointments, and have opened more counters to process licensing applications with scheduled appointments, while providing follow-up services for applications submitted by drop-in box, by post or online.

Mr Law praised government departments for striving to provide more needed services to the public in a safe and orderly manner by putting in place various infection control and social distancing measures. He also expressed gratitude to colleagues for their commitment and dedicated efforts during the epidemic.



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## HA approved to freeze letting of recovered TPS flats

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

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) Subsidised Housing Committee (SHC) today (March 10) approved to freeze the letting of recovered flats from Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) estates with effect from tomorrow (March 11), with a view to putting up these flats for sale later.

"Putting up recovered TPS flats for sale can accelerate the sale of

unsold TPS flats, so as to further address the persistently strong demand for subsidised sale flats on the one hand and help resolve the estate management and maintenance problems arising from mixed ownership in TPS estates on the other," a spokesman for the HA said.

He added that, before putting up recovered TPS flats for sale, the HA would need to consider and decide on a number of issues including the relevant target buyers, pricing mechanism and alienation restrictions, and sales approach.

"Views of the Members of the Legislative Council Panel on Housing regarding how to accelerate the sales of unsold TPS flats will also be sought at its meeting on March 30 this year. Having taken into account these views, as well as those of SHC Members, we will put up recommendations for SHC's consideration as soon as possible, aiming to make available these recovered TPS flats for sale in end-2020 or early 2021 tentatively," the spokesman said.

He further said that, in the longer term, aside from putting up recovered TPS flats for sale, the HA might also need to draw up other measures to expedite the sale of TPS flats, including those currently leased to sitting tenants. Measures that can be considered may include, but are not limited to, providing additional incentives to sitting tenants to purchase their flats, and developing a special programme to transfer out tenants with no intention to purchase their flats to other non-TPS estates.

In the 2019 Policy Address, the Chief Executive proposed that the HA make active preparations with a view to accelerating the sale of the unsold flats in the 39 TPS estates. In the past five years, the HA has recovered around 1 200 rental flats from TPS estates annually through normal course and sold around 3 100 flats to sitting TPS tenants each year on average.

As at end-December 2019, around 41 000 flats (i.e. around 22 per cent) of the 184 000 TPS flats put up for sale remained unsold. The sales rate of each TPS estate varies, ranging from around 45 to 93 per cent.

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## **Announcement by Judiciary**

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary announced today (March 10) that following the re-opening of the Court of Final Appeal and High Court registries on March 9, the Family Court Registry will re-open on March 12 and the District Court Registry will re-open on March 13.

While the above registries will be generally re-opened for business with

effect from the dates indicated above, special arrangements will be made for the registries to handle filing and other business in an orderly and effective manner. Some of the business will continue to be suspended during the initial re-opening of the registries. Any party or court user who needs to use any of the suspended business of the Family Court and District Court registries on the ground of urgency may apply to the relevant registry in writing with justifications. A list of suspended business for the respective registries is set out in the Annex. It is also uploaded onto the Judiciary website.

#### Preventive and crowd management measures

Having struck a careful balance between public health considerations and the orderly reopening of registries, the Judiciary will continue to put in place appropriate preventive and crowd management measures for the health protection of all people who enter and remain in the court premises. Court users are required to have their body temperature taken and wear a surgical mask before they are allowed to enter and remain in the court premises. The Judiciary will constantly review the situation and introduce any new measures as appropriate.

It is expected that there will be more court users visiting the courts. The capacity of registries and accounts offices of the Family Court and the District Court will be suitably expanded to cope with the expected upsurge in workload. Special arrangements, including queuing and the introduction of a ticketing and triage system, will also be put in place to regulate the entry of court users into and inside the court premises. Detailed arrangements will be provided and uploaded onto the Judiciary website before the re-opening of the registries. Court users are strongly advised to check the updated information from the Judiciary website, and follow the advice of the Judiciary staff and security personnel when they attend for court business upon the re-opening of the court registries.

#### Enquiries and information update

For general enquiries, the following hotlines are operated from Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 1pm and 2pm to 5.30pm:

- General Information: 2869 0869
- Family Court: 2840 1218
- District Court: 2845 5696

The Judiciary will continue to post updated information, including Daily Cause Lists, messages related to the Judiciary's arrangements arising from public health considerations, and advice to court users visiting the courts during the general adjourned period, onto the Judiciary website ([www.judiciary.hk](http://www.judiciary.hk)). Court users are advised to check the website for updated information as necessary.



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## Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the fourth quarter of 2019

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (March 10) released the statistics on port cargo and containers for the fourth quarter of 2019.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, total port cargo throughput increased by 4.2% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 67.8 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo increased by 14.5% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 45.8 million tonnes, while outward port cargo decreased by 12.3% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 22.0 million tonnes.

For 2019 as a whole, total port cargo throughput increased by 1.8% compared with the whole year of 2018 to 263.3 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo increased by 7.2% compared with the whole year of 2018 to 170.9 million tonnes, while outward port cargo decreased by 6.7% compared with the whole year of 2018 to 92.4 million tonnes.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, total port cargo throughput decreased by 2.1% in the fourth quarter of 2019. Within this total, inward port cargo increased by 1.7% compared with the preceding quarter, while outward port cargo decreased by 9.1% compared with the preceding quarter. The seasonally adjusted series enables more meaningful shorter-term comparison to be made for discerning possible variations in trends.

### Port cargo

Within port cargo, seaborne and river cargo increased by 1.7% and 8.4% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 41.9 million tonnes and 25.9 million tonnes respectively.

Within inward port cargo, imports increased by 27.9% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 29.0 million tonnes, while inward transshipment decreased by 3.0% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 16.8 million tonnes. For outward port cargo, exports (including domestic exports and re-exports) and outward transshipment decreased by 24.0% and 6.5% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 6.3 million tonnes and 15.7 million tonnes respectively.

Within port cargo, seaborne cargo decreased by 2.0% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 161.3 million tonnes, while river cargo increased by 8.5% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the

whole year of 2018 to 102.0 million tonnes.

Within inward port cargo, imports increased by 16.4% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 106.4 million tonnes, while inward transshipment decreased by 5.3% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 64.5 million tonnes. For outward port cargo, exports and outward transshipment decreased by 9.3% and 5.4% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 30.6 million tonnes and 61.8 million tonnes respectively.

The detailed port cargo statistics are summarised in Table 1.

The main countries/territories of loading of inward port cargo and countries/territories of discharge of outward port cargo are shown in Table 2 and Table 3 respectively.

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2019 with the fourth quarter of 2018, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Taiwan (+67.6%), Indonesia (+57.3%), Vietnam (+34.3%), the mainland of China (+23.2%) and Malaysia (+22.3%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Singapore (-27.9%), the United States of America (-24.4%), Japan (-12.5%) and Thailand (-10.1%). For outward port cargo, triple-digit or double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Macao (+224.9%) and Thailand (+23.1%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in the United States of America (-31.1%), Vietnam (-25.1%), Japan (-21.0%), the mainland of China (-15.5%), Malaysia (-11.6%) and the Philippines (-10.6%).

Comparing the whole year of 2019 with the whole year of 2018, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Taiwan (+48.7%), Malaysia (+17.3%), Vietnam (+13.4%) and the mainland of China (+13.2%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in the United States of America (-19.0%), Japan (-17.0%) and Indonesia (-14.3%). For outward port cargo, triple-digit increase was recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Macao (+119.0%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Vietnam (-21.3%), the United States of America (-16.7%) and Japan (-10.3%).

The principal commodities of inward port cargo and outward port cargo are shown in Table 4 and Table 5 respectively.

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2019 with the fourth quarter of 2018, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "stone, sand and gravel" (+85.6%) and "coal, coke and briquettes" (+59.2%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of "stone, sand and gravel" (-37.6%) and "pulp and waste paper" (-26.3%).

Comparing the whole year of 2019 with the whole year of 2018, double-

digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "stone, sand and gravel" (+74.3%), "logs and timber; wood, simply worked" (-13.6%) and "coal, coke and briquettes" (-14.3%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of "pulp and waste paper" (-21.5%) and "logs and timber; wood, simply worked" (-11.5%).

## Containers

In the fourth quarter of 2019, the port of Hong Kong handled 4.59 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 7.5% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018. Within this total, laden and empty containers decreased by 6.6% and 11.9% to 3.92 million TEUs and 0.67 million TEUs respectively. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 4.6% and 8.9% to 2.06 million TEUs and 1.85 million TEUs respectively.

For 2019 as a whole, the port of Hong Kong handled 18.30 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 6.6% compared with the whole year of 2018. Within this total, laden and empty containers decreased by 6.3% and 8.6% to 15.65 million TEUs and 2.65 million TEUs respectively. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 5.4% and 7.1% to 8.16 million TEUs and 7.50 million TEUs respectively.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, laden container throughput decreased by 1.3% in the fourth quarter of 2019. Within this total, inward laden containers remained virtually unchanged, while outward laden containers decreased by 2.7%.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, seaborne and river laden containers decreased by 7.0% and 5.9% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 2.75 million TEUs and 1.17 million TEUs respectively.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 4.9% and 4.4% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 0.60 million TEUs and 1.46 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment decreased by 14.4% and 6.7% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 0.49 million TEUs and 1.36 million TEUs respectively.

In the whole year of 2019, seaborne and river laden containers decreased by 7.5% and 3.2% compared with the whole year of 2018 to 10.98 million TEUs and 4.67 million TEUs respectively.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 3.6% and 6.2% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 2.48 million TEUs and 5.68 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment decreased by 9.4% and 6.3% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 2.04 million TEUs and 5.45 million TEUs respectively.

The detailed container statistics are summarised in Table 6.

Port cargo and laden container statistics are compiled from a sample of consignments listed in the cargo manifests supplied by shipping companies and agents to the C&SD.

## Vessel arrivals

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2019 with the fourth quarter of 2018, the number of ocean vessel arrivals increased by 3.4% to 6 643, with the total capacity also increasing by 3.9% to 104.0 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 11.7% to 32 679, while the total capacity increased by 4.0% to 29.8 million net tons.

Comparing the whole year of 2019 with the whole year of 2018, the number of ocean vessel arrivals decreased by 0.1% to 25 388, with the total capacity also decreasing by 0.1% to 398.4 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 8.9% to 135 864, while the total capacity increased by 4.4% to 115.5 million net tons.

The statistics on vessel arrivals in Hong Kong are given in Table 7.

Vessel statistics are compiled by the Marine Department primarily from general declarations submitted by ship masters and authorised shipping agents. Pleasure vessels and fishing vessels plying exclusively within the river trade limits are excluded.

## Further information

More detailed statistics on port cargo, containers and vessels are published in the report "Hong Kong Shipping Statistics, Fourth Quarter 2019". Users can download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp130.jsp?productCode=B1020008](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp130.jsp?productCode=B1020008)).

For enquiries about port cargo and container statistics, please contact the Outward Processing and Shipping Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 2126 or email: [shipping@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:shipping@censtatd.gov.hk)). For enquiries about vessel statistics, readers may contact the Statistics Section under the Planning, Development and Port Security Branch of the Marine Department (Tel: 2852 3662 or email: [st-sec@mardep.gov.hk](mailto:st-sec@mardep.gov.hk)).

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## Exchange Fund Bills tender results

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

Exchange Fund Bills tender results:



Tender date : March 10, 2020  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : Q2011  
Issue date : March 11, 2020  
Maturity date : June 10, 2020  
Amount applied : HK\$135,910 MN  
Amount allotted : HK\$47,319 MN  
Average yield accepted : 0.59 PCT  
Highest yield accepted : 0.62 PCT  
Pro rata ratio : About 67 PCT  
Average tender yield : 0.74 PCT

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Tender date : March 10, 2020  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : H2040  
Issue date : March 11, 2020  
Maturity date : September 9, 2020  
Amount applied : HK\$67,475 MN  
Amount allotted : HK\$14,000 MN  
Average yield accepted : 0.57 PCT  
Highest yield accepted : 0.59 PCT  
Pro rata ratio : About 70 PCT  
Average tender yield : 0.70 PCT

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Hong Kong Monetary Authority tenders to be held in the week beginning March 16:

Tender date : March 17, 2020  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : Q2012  
Issue date : March 18, 2020  
Maturity date : June 17, 2020  
Tenor : 91 Days  
Amount on offer : HK\$44,243 MN

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Tender date : March 17, 2020  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : H2041  
Issue date : March 18, 2020  
Maturity date : September 16, 2020  
Tenor : 182 Days

Amount on offer : HK\$11,000 MN

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Tender date : March 17, 2020

Paper on offer : EF Bills

Issue number : Y2087

Issue date : March 18, 2020

Maturity date : March 17, 2021

Tenor : 364 Days

Amount on offer : HK\$1,300 MN