

# Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, February 17, 2020 is 107.1 (same as last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, February 15, 2020 was 107.1 (up 0.1 against last Friday's index).

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## Special traffic arrangements on Hong Kong Island

Police will implement special traffic arrangements in the vicinity of Lin Fa Kung in Tai Hang from February 18 to 19 to facilitate worshippers attending the ceremony of Kwun Yum Treasury Opening.

### A. Road closure

The following roads will be closed from about 4pm on February 18 to 7pm the following day:

- Lai Yin Lane;
- Lin Fa Kung Street East;
- Lin Fa Kung Street West; and
- Lily Street.

### B. Suspension of parking spaces

All metered parking spaces and motorcycle parking spaces on the eastern kerbside lane of Tung Lo Wan Road between its northern and southern junctions with Lai Yin Lane will be suspended from about 10am on February 18 to 7pm the following day.

Actual implementation of the traffic arrangements will be made depending on traffic and crowd conditions in the area. Members of the public are advised to exercise tolerance and patience and take heed of instructions of the Police on site.

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# CFS announces test results of targeted surveillance on use of sulphur dioxide in meat

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (February 17) released the test results of a targeted food surveillance project on the use of sulphur dioxide in meat. Among some 600 samples tested – except for 12 samples found to contain sulphur dioxide, a non-permitted preservative in fresh meat, which were announced earlier – all the remaining samples passed the test. The overall satisfactory rate was 98 per cent.

"In view of the detection of the preservative in fresh meat samples in the past, the CFS has conducted targeted surveillance projects regularly on the use of the chemical in meat in recent years. Samples of beef, pork and mutton were collected from fresh provision shops, supermarkets, market meat stalls and online retailers for testing. The sampling locations also included meat shops and stalls which had previous records of selling meat containing sulphur dioxide," a spokesman for the CFS said.

Sulphur dioxide is a commonly used preservative in a variety of foods including dried fruits, pickled vegetables and meat products such as sausages and grilled burgers. However, under the Preservatives in Food Regulation (Cap 132BD), it is not permitted in fresh or chilled meat. Nonetheless, individual meat traders have been found illegally using sulphur dioxide to make meat look fresher. Sulphur dioxide is of low toxicity. As it is water-soluble, most of it can be removed through washing and cooking. However, susceptible individuals who are allergic to sulphur dioxide may experience breathing difficulties, headaches and nausea.

Under the Regulation, the maximum penalty upon conviction of using sulphur dioxide in fresh or chilled meat is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The spokesman reminded the food trade to comply with the law and not to sell fresh or chilled meat containing sulphur dioxide. Members of the public should purchase meat from reliable vendors (including market stalls, fresh provision shops and online retailers, etc.) and avoid buying or consuming meat which is unnaturally red.

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## Tender period extended for provision of services to operate Sham Shui Po and Wong Tai Sin District Health Centres

The Food and Health Bureau (FHB) announced today (February 17) that the tender period for provision of services to operate Sham Shui Po and Wong Tai Sin District Health Centres has been extended to noon on April 24.

The FHB invited the above tenders on December 30, 2019. The original tender closing time was noon on February 28, 2020.

For enquiries, please contact the FHB at 2205 2467 or 2205 2480.

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## Hong Kong Customs urges public to stop letting babies use one model of teether (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs today (February 17) alerted parents to immediately stop letting their babies use one model of teether. It could pose suffocation risks to a baby since the tail is too small and could become stuck in a baby's throat easily, contrary to the general safety requirements stipulated in the Toys and Children's Products Safety Ordinance (TCPSO).

Customs also found a further two models of teethers failed to comply with the requirements under the TCPSO to bear identification markings and applicable bilingual warnings or cautions.

Customs officers earlier conducted a territory-wide spot check operation in various districts and seized 1 095 teethers of three models in contravention of the TCPSO from four chain stores and a wholesaler. Of these, 937 teethers could pose suffocation risks and 158 teethers failed to bear identification markings and applicable bilingual warnings or cautions.

Investigation is ongoing.

Customs reminds members of the public to observe the following safety tips when purchasing teethers:

- Pay attention to age recommendations shown on labels;
- Study and follow the instructions associated with the teethingers;
- Check the structures of the teethingers, such as checking whether they have a fragile structure. Detached fragments may block a baby's throat and lead to suffocation if swallowed;
- Throw away the plastic packaging of a teether to avoid children being suffocated; and
- Stop babies chewing the teethingers immediately if any damage is observed.

Customs is committed to the protection of consumer interests and regularly conducts spot checks and safety tests on toys and children's products to ensure that they are reasonably safe for use by consumers.

Under the TCPSO, it is an offence to supply, manufacture or import unsafe toys or children's products. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year on first conviction, and a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years on subsequent conviction.

Members of the public may report information relating to suspected unsafe toys or children's products via Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).



