

Centre for Food Safety Launches Food Safety Portal

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (December 23) launched its Food Trader Portal (FTP), a website serving as a one-stop electronic communication platform between food traders and the CFS.

A CFS spokesperson said, "The CFS has actively sought to use IT to enhance its mode of operation and offer online services to assist the trade in recent years. Through the FTP, food traders may complete registration as food importers or distributors under the law, and starting from early 2020 they may also submit applications for import licences and import permission online, and report the arrival of certain imported food consignments around the clock."

The spokesperson added, "The FTP will be rolled out in phases, starting with today's launch of the trader registration module which allows food traders to open FTP user accounts to receive food safety and import control notifications electronically and perform tasks online such as renewal of registration and updating of trader information. The functions of the FTP will be further enhanced in early 2020 with the introduction of online application for import licences and import permission for game, meat and poultry. After the completion of this phase, we will again progressively enhance the functions of the FTP to cover applications for the import of milk, frozen confections and eggs.

"With the implementation of the FTP, the CFS will introduce a number of facilitating measures, including the use of simpler formats and application forms for import licences and import permission and extending the operating hours of the Import Licensing Office for processing online application for import licences and more. Food traders will then be able to make use of online services without having to send their staff to submit application forms in person at the CFS."

In preparation for the rollout of the FTP, the CFS has organised training sessions to provide hands-on experience in use of the FTP for food traders. A series of promotional and tutorial videos on how to use the FTP have been produced and uploaded to the FTP website (www.ftp.cfs.gov.hk). Leaflets providing an overview of the FTP have also been distributed. Two seminars for importers of game, meat and poultry were held in November 2019 to help them get familiarised with the functions and operations of the FTP. About 200 trade representatives attended the seminars.

The spokesperson stressed that while use of the FTP is voluntary, food traders are encouraged to open user accounts early to enjoy the convenient and fast services offered at the FTP.

For more details, please visit the FTP at www.ftp.cfs.gov.hk.

[Heritage Discovery Centre holds "Treasures from Sacred Hill: Song-Yuan Period Archaeological Discoveries from Kai Tak" exhibition \(with photos\)](#)

An exhibition entitled "Treasures from Sacred Hill: Song-Yuan Period Archaeological Discoveries from Kai Tak", featuring around 200 archaeological finds unearthed at the Kai Tak area, will be open from tomorrow (December 24) until February 26, 2020, at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre.

The Chairman of the Antiquities Advisory Board, Mr Douglas So; the Commissioner for Heritage of the Development Bureau, Mr José Yam; and the Executive Secretary of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO), Ms Susanna Siu, officiated at the opening ceremony today (December 23).

Following the closure of Kai Tak Airport in 1998, the planning work for the Kai Tak Development Area created opportunities for archaeological studies around the former Sacred Hill in today's Kowloon Bay. An abundance of cultural remains of the Song-Yuan period were unearthed, including a huge amount of ceramics produced by various kilns in Zhejiang, Fujian and Jiangxi. Similar products from the same period were exported widely and could be found in shipwrecks along the maritime ceramics route. The exhibition will enable visitors to understand more about the economic development, maritime trade and people's way of life in the area back then.

Exhibit highlights include green glazed incense burners with an eight trigrams pattern and a green glazed dish with a moulded double fish pattern produced by Longquan Kiln, a brown glazed dragon jar with lugs and a green glazed basin with a phoenix pattern produced by Cizao Kiln, and a Dagan Tongbao bronze coin. Ceramics from the same period on loan from the Art Museum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong will also be displayed.

Curated by the AMO, the exhibition has free admission. Details can be obtained from the AMO's website (www.amo.gov.hk) or by calling 2208 4400.

The Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre is located in Kowloon Park, Haiphong Road, Tsim Sha Tsui.



Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, December 23, 2019 is 106.5 (up 0.1 against yesterday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, December 21, 2019 was 106.4 (up 0.1 against last Friday's index).

Seventeen building plans approved in October

The Buildings Department approved 17 building plans in October, with six

on Hong Kong Island, four in Kowloon and seven in the New Territories.

Of the approved plans, eight were for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, four were for commercial developments, two were for factory and industrial developments, and three were for community services developments.

In the same month, consent was given for works to start on nine building projects which, when completed, will provide 56 652 square metres of gross floor area for domestic use involving 1 749 units, and 10 848 sq m of gross floor area for non-domestic use. The department has received notification of commencement of superstructure works for four building projects.

The department also issued 19 occupation permits, with six on Hong Kong Island, three in Kowloon and 10 in the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation, the gross floor area for domestic use was 120 440 sq m involving 2 074 units, and 56 318 sq m was for non-domestic use.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in October totalled about \$7.7 billion.

In addition, eight demolition consents involving eight building structures were issued.

The department received 3 083 reports about unauthorised building works (UBWs) in October and issued 807 removal orders on UBWs.

The full version of the Monthly Digest for October can be viewed on the Buildings Department's homepage (www.bd.gov.hk).

LCSD urges public to keep venues clean during Christmas

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (December 23) appealed to members of the public to keep venues clean and mind their safety while celebrating Christmas.

The LCSD will work with other government departments to implement a series of measures over Christmas (December 24 to 26) to maintain cleanliness and safety at LCSD venues, especially at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre (HKCC) Piazza, Salisbury Garden, the Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade, the Avenue of Stars, Middle Road Children's Playground, Tsim Sha Tsui East Waterfront Podium Garden and Urban Council Centenary Garden, where large crowds are expected.

An LCSD spokesman said, "Our staff, together with law enforcement teams of relevant departments, will step up patrols at our venues in the Tsim Sha

Tsui area and take action against littering, illegal hawking and vandalism of public property. Those who litter will be liable to a fine of \$1,500.

"In crowded areas, people should remain calm and take care of their own safety," he added.

The public announcement systems at the HKCC will also broadcast anti-littering and crowd management messages in Cantonese, Putonghua and English on a regular basis during the holidays.