

## Managers of unlicensed guesthouses fined

Two men and a woman were fined from \$8,000 to \$9,000 at the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today (August 28) for contravening the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance.

The courts heard that from February to April this year, officers of the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA), the Home Affairs Department, inspected three suspected unlicensed guesthouses on Portland Street, Tong Mi Road and Lok Shan Road in Kowloon. During the inspections, the OLA officers posed as lodgers and successfully rented rooms in these guesthouses on a daily basis.

According to the OLA's records, these guesthouses did not possess licences under the Ordinance on the days of inspection. The men and the woman responsible for managing the premises were charged with contravening section 5(1) of the Ordinance.

A department spokesman stressed that operating or managing an unlicensed guesthouse is a criminal offence and can lead to a criminal record. Upon conviction, the offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The spokesman appealed to anyone with information about suspected unlicensed guesthouses to report it to the OLA through the hotline (tel: 2881 7498), by email ([hadlaeng@had.gov.hk](mailto:hadlaeng@had.gov.hk)), by fax (2504 5805) using the report form downloaded from the OLA website ([www.hadla.gov.hk](http://www.hadla.gov.hk)), or through the mobile application "Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses".

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## Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Swimming Pool temporarily closed

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (August 28) that Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Swimming Pool in Yuen Long District has been temporarily closed for cleaning and superchlorination following the discovery

of a small amount of vomit in the pool.

It will be reopened at 8.15pm today.

The department appeals to swimmers to be considerate and to keep the swimming pools clean. They are advised not to swim after a full meal and should use the toilet facilities if necessary before swimming.

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## **BFAC appreciates Government's efforts in facilitating application of innovation and technology**

The following is issued on behalf of the Business Facilitation Advisory Committee Secretariat:

The Business Facilitation Advisory Committee held its 40th meeting today (August 28). At the meeting, members received a briefing from the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department on the E&M InnoPortal.

The platform collects from government departments, public organisations and the electrical and mechanical trade their needs for various technologies for the innovation and technology (I&T) sector, including start-ups and academic institutions, to offer corresponding I&T solutions to match such needs. The platform not only promotes the commercialisation of the results of research and development, but also facilitates government departments and public organisations identify I&T solutions through the application of new technologies, thus promoting the development of a smart city.

The Committee appreciated the Government's efforts in promoting local I&T development, facilitating the application of I&T in the Government and enhancing public service through launching of the platform.

The Committee also noted the work of its three task forces:

### **Wholesale and Retail Task Force (WRTF)**

- The Trade and Industry Department briefed members on the funding schemes administered by the department and the enhancement measures. The WRTF welcomed the funding schemes which assisted Hong Kong enterprises, in particular small and medium enterprises, in obtaining finance, exploring export markets and enhancing their overall competitiveness.
- The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) briefed the WRTF on its work plan for 2019-20. The WRTF appreciated the HKTb's initiatives and efforts in promoting diversified tourism and maintaining visitor satisfaction

levels. The WRTF also considered that the Government should implement measures to facilitate the retail industry to boost sales.

#### Food Business and Related Services Task Force (FRSTF)

- The Labour Department explained to the FRSTF the statutory requirement of the relevant occupational safety and health law in regard to fire precautions to facilitate the trade's compliance.
- In light of the latest business operation, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) explained the relaxed licensing requirement for eating and drinking utensils for takeaway foods for relevant food business licences. This allows the trade greater flexibility in meeting actual operational needs.
- In order to foster the trade to further apply innovation and technology to enhance efficiency in business operation, the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute introduced its service offerings and how businesses can partner with it on new research and development (R&D) initiatives.
- The FRSTF appreciated the departments' and organisation's efforts in explaining the various regulatory requirements, responding to their enquiries and listening to their concerns; as well as introducing the new channel to embark on R&D projects.

#### Task Force on Business Liaison Groups (BLGTF)

- The Innovation and Technology Commission briefed the BLGTF on the Technology Voucher Programme and a series of enhancement measures being introduced. The BLGTF welcomed the Government's enhancement measures, which could encourage wider adoption of technology solutions by the trades to improve efficiency and their services.
- The Home Affairs Department briefed members on the mechanism and arrangements for exemption of eligible e-sports venues from the requirements of the Amusement Game Centre Licence to promote the development of e-sports. The FEHD, in collaboration with the Buildings Department and the Fire Services Department, provided a briefing on the new business facilitation measures to respond to the trade's expectations to expedite the processing of cinema licence renewal applications.
- The BLGTF thanked the departments concerned for their efforts in implementing these measures to facilitate the development of the e-sports and cinema industry.

The Committee also expressed appreciation of the commitment and achievements of the bureaux and departments in further enhancing their business licensing services under the "Be the Smart Regulator" Programme.

Papers for the Committee meeting are available at [www.gov.hk/en/business/supportenterprises/bf/advisory/index.htm](http://www.gov.hk/en/business/supportenterprises/bf/advisory/index.htm) for public access.

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## **Effective Exchange Rate Index**

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Wednesday, August 28, 2019 is 107.3 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

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## **Consultation period for initial recommendations of Task Force on Review of School Curriculum extended**

The Task Force on Review of School Curriculum today (August 28) announced that the period for the public consultation on its initial recommendations will be extended for one month to October 16.

The Consultation Document was released on June 28 to solicit views on a set of initial recommendations for fostering students' whole-person development and taking forward curriculum development to better prepare students for future challenges.

Having considered the requests and active response from the public, the Task Force decided to extend the consultation period so that members of the public can have more time to discuss the initial recommendations and send submissions in response to the Consultation Document.

The Consultation Document is now available at [www.edb.gov.hk/en/about-edb/press/consultation](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/about-edb/press/consultation). Members of the public are invited to send their views and suggestions to the Task Force by post (Secretariat, Task Force on Review of School Curriculum, Room 1301, 13/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong), by fax (2573 5299) or by email ([taskforce\\_cur@edb.gov.hk](mailto:taskforce_cur@edb.gov.hk)) on or before October 16, 2019.