

HAD distributes complimentary COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff in Tuen Mun and Sai Kung Districts (with photos)

In light of positive test results for the COVID-19 virus from some sewage samples collected in Tuen Mun and Sai Kung Districts, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) said today (May 6) that the Tuen Mun District Office (TMDO) and the Sai Kung District Office (SKDO) have distributed a total of about 187 000 COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in the districts.

The TMDO distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Shan King Estate, Pierhead Garden, Marina Garden, Miami Beach Towers and Lung Mun Oasis for voluntary testing through the property management companies.

The SKDO distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in On Ning Garden and Nan Fung Plaza for voluntary testing through the property management companies. The SKDO also distributed rapid test kits to households living in Tseung Kwan O Village and Yau Yue Wan Village for voluntary testing through the Hang Hau Rural Committee and the Village Representatives.

The HAD made the above arrangements in the hope of identifying infected persons early.

Members of the public may refer to the demonstration video produced by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) under the Department of Health (DH) via www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzFAUzTtmKk to learn how to use the rapid antigen test (RAT) kit.

Persons testing positive through an RAT should take a photo of the test result and declare the result within 24 hours via the Declaration System for Individuals Tested Positive for COVID-19 Using Rapid Antigen Test (www.chp.gov.hk/ratp). If members of the public encounter difficulties in using the online platform, they can call the automated system at 183 6119 to register their identification document and telephone number. The CHP under the DH will contact the relevant person later to complete the report procedure. There is no need to declare negative test results.

The Government appeals for the co-operation of members of the public to safeguard the health of themselves and their families by undergoing testing on a voluntary basis and fighting the virus together. The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or

individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases that tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons to reduce the transmission risks of COVID-19.



Provisional statistics of restaurant receipts and purchases for first quarter of 2022

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released the latest provisional figures on restaurant receipts and purchases today (May 6).

The value of total receipts of the restaurants sector in the first quarter of 2022, provisionally estimated at \$15.2 billion, decreased by 23.1% over a year earlier. Over the same period, the provisional estimate of the value of total purchases by restaurants decreased by 18.9% to \$5.2 billion.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, the provisional estimate of the volume of total restaurant receipts decreased by 25.4% in the first quarter of 2022 compared with a year earlier.

Analysed by type of restaurant and comparing the first quarter of 2022 with the first quarter of 2021, total receipts of Chinese restaurants decreased by 33.5% in value and 35.4% in volume. Total receipts of non-Chinese restaurants decreased by 23.6% in value and 26.1% in volume. Total receipts of fast food shops decreased by 11.3% in value and 13.9% in volume. Total receipts of bars decreased by 34.9% in value and 34.0% in volume. As for miscellaneous eating and drinking places, total receipts decreased by 12.9% in value and 15.1% in volume.

Based on the seasonally adjusted series, the provisional estimate of total restaurant receipts decreased by 40.2% in value and 39.5% in volume in

the first quarter of 2022 compared with the preceding quarter.

To facilitate further understanding of the short-term business performance of the restaurants sector, statistics in respect of the restaurant receipts and purchases in individual months of the reference quarter are also compiled.

Analysed by month, it was provisionally estimated that the value of total receipts of the restaurants sector increased by 15.3% in January, but decreased by 31.4% and 46.9% respectively in February and March 2022, compared with the corresponding months in 2021.

After discounting the effect of price changes, it was provisionally estimated that the volume of total restaurant receipts increased by 11.3% in January, but decreased by 33.4% and 48.4% respectively in February and March 2022, compared with the corresponding months in 2021.

Commentary

A Government spokesman said that business of restaurants deteriorated sharply in the first quarter of 2022 due to the fifth wave of local epidemic and the resultant restrictive measures. The value of total restaurant receipts fell visibly by 23.1% year-on-year despite a low base of comparison. On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, it plunged by 40.2%.

The spokesman pointed out that the easing local epidemic situation and gradual relaxation of social distancing measures, as well as the launch of a new round of Consumption Voucher Scheme, should provide support to business of restaurants in the coming months. Various other support measures rolled out by the Government should also help. It is essential for the community to work in unison to support the Government to further stabilise the local epidemic situation. The Government will continue to monitor the developments closely.

Further information

Table 1 presents the revised figures of restaurant receipts by type of restaurant and total purchases by the restaurants sector for the fourth quarter of 2021 as well as the provisional figures for the first quarter of 2022.

Table 2 and Table 3 present the revised value and volume indices respectively of restaurant receipts by type of restaurant for the fourth quarter of 2021 and the provisional indices for the first quarter of 2022.

Table 4 presents the year-on-year rate of change in total restaurant receipts in value and volume terms based on the original quarterly series, as well as the quarter-to-quarter rate of change based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The revised figures on restaurant receipts and purchases for the first quarter of 2022 (with breakdown by month) will be released through the website of C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/scode540.html) and relevant

publications of the Department from June 20, 2022.

The classification of restaurants follows the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification (HSIC) Version 2.0, which is used in various economic surveys for classifying economic units into different industry classes.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Report on Quarterly Survey of Restaurant Receipts and Purchases". Users can download this publication at the website of C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1080002&scode=540).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Distribution Services Statistics Section of C&SD (Tel: 3903 7401; email: qsr@censtatd.gov.hk).

[Hong Kong's latest foreign currency reserve assets figures released](#)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (May 6) that the official foreign currency reserve assets of Hong Kong amounted to US\$465.7 billion as at the end of April 2022 (end-March 2022: US\$481.6 billion) (Annex).

Including unsettled foreign exchange contracts, the foreign currency reserve assets of Hong Kong at the end of April 2022 amounted to US\$464.4 billion (end-March 2022: US\$479.6 billion).

The total foreign currency reserve assets of US\$465.7 billion represent about six times the currency in circulation or 44 per cent of Hong Kong dollar M3.

At present, four press releases relating to the Exchange Fund's data are issued by the HKMA each month. Three of these releases are issued to disseminate monetary data in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The fourth press release, on the Exchange Fund's Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account, is made in accordance with the HKMA's policy of maintaining a high level of transparency. For the month of May 2022, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

May 6	SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
May 13	SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund)
May 31	SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity
May 31	Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account

Senior appointment (with photo)

The Government announced today (May 6) that Mr Michael Fong Hok-shing, Principal Government Engineer, will take up the post of Director of Civil Engineering and Development on May 10, 2022.

Commenting on the appointment of Mr Fong, the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, said, "Mr Fong has profound professional knowledge and leadership skills. I am confident that he will be able to lead the Civil Engineering and Development Department to meet the challenges ahead and continue to deliver quality services to the community."

A brief biographical note of Mr Fong is set out below:

Mr Michael Fong Hok-shing

Mr Fong joined the Government as Assistant Engineer in September 1991. He was promoted to Chief Engineer in August 2012, to Government Engineer in July 2016, and to Principal Government Engineer in June 2019.



Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, May 6, 2022 is 99.6 (up 0.9 against yesterday's index).