

Commissioner of Customs and Excise welcomes China National Intellectual Property Administration delegation's visit to Hong Kong Customs (with photos)

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Mr Chan welcomed Dr Lu and his delegation to visit Hong Kong Customs and chaired a meeting. During the meeting, both parties discussed several topics, including collaboration with relevant government departments and agencies, and close co-operation with the intellectual property industry.

Mr Chan said that Hong Kong Customs has officially assumed the post of the Vice-Chairperson for the Asia/Pacific region of the World Customs Organization since last year. Hong Kong Customs will host international conferences and plan large-scale regional enforcement operations and capacity-building activities during the tenure, putting the concept of integrating into national development into practice and hence help develop Hong Kong into a regional intellectual property trading hub.



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Consumer Price Indices for January 2025

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (February 20) the Consumer Price Index (CPI) figures for January 2025. According to the Composite CPI, overall consumer prices rose by 2.0% in January 2025 over the same month a year earlier, larger than the corresponding increase (1.4%) in December 2024. The larger increase was attributable to the waiver of the

extra public housing rent payable that ended in December 2024, as well as the increases in inbound and outbound transport fares and basic food prices due to the Chinese New Year effect. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the year-on-year rate of increase in the Composite CPI (i.e. the underlying inflation rate) in January 2025 was 1.6%, also larger than that in December 2024 (1.3%). The larger increase was also attributed to the increases in inbound and outbound transport fares and basic food prices due to the Chinese New Year effect.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the average monthly rate of increase in the Composite CPI for the 3-month period ending January 2025 was 0.1%, the same as that for the 3-month period ending December 2024. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the corresponding rates of increase were 0.1% and 0.2%.

Analysed by sub-index, the year-on-year rates of increase in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 2.5%, 1.7% and 1.7% respectively in January 2025, as compared to 1.7%, 1.4% and 1.2% respectively in December 2024. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the year-on-year rates of increase in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 1.9%, 1.5% and 1.5% respectively in January 2025, as compared to 1.6%, 1.2% and 1.1% respectively in December 2024.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, for the 3-month period ending January 2025, the average monthly rates of change in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 0.2%, 0.1% and 0.1% respectively. The corresponding rates of change for the 3-month period ending December 2024 were all 0.1%. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the average monthly rates of change in the seasonally adjusted CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) for the 3-month period ending January 2025 were 0.0%, 0.1% and 0.1% respectively, and the corresponding rates of change for the 3-month period ending December 2024 were 0.3%, 0.1% and 0.1% respectively.

Amongst the various components of the Composite CPI, year-on-year increases in prices were recorded in January 2025 for alcoholic drinks and tobacco (20.7%), electricity, gas and water (13.2%), transport (4.0%), miscellaneous services (2.8%), meals out and takeaway food (1.7%), housing (1.5%), miscellaneous goods (0.8%), and basic food (0.3%).

On the other hand, year-on-year decreases in the components of the Composite CPI were recorded in January 2025 for clothing and footwear (-3.4%), and durable goods (-1.0%).

For the 3 months ending January 2025, the Composite CPI rose by 1.6% over a year earlier, while the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) rose by 1.9%, 1.5% and 1.3% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 1.3%, 1.7%, 1.2% and 1.2% respectively.

For the 12 months ending January 2025, the Composite CPI was on average 1.8% higher than that in the preceding 12-month period. The respective increases in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 2.1%, 1.6% and 1.5%

respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 1.1%, 1.1%, 1.1% and 1.2% respectively.

Commentary

A Government spokesman said that underlying consumer price inflation was modest in January. Food prices as a whole continued to record mild year-on-year increases. Prices of energy-related items picked up further, but remained moderate. Price pressures on other major components stayed broadly in check. As the Chinese New Year this year falls on a different month compared to that in the preceding year, it would be more prudent to examine the figures for January and February combined, when available, to assess the underlying inflation situation.

Looking ahead, overall inflation should remain moderate in the near term. As the Hong Kong economy continues to grow, domestic costs may see some upward pressures. External price pressures should remain contained. However, uncertainties stemming from geopolitical tensions and trade conflicts warrant attention. The Government will continue to monitor the situation.

Further information

The CPIs and year-on-year rates of change at section level for January 2025 are shown in Table 1. The time series on the year-on-year rates of change in the CPIs before and after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures are shown in Table 2. For discerning the latest trend in consumer prices, it is also useful to look at the changes in the seasonally adjusted CPIs. The time series on the average monthly rates of change during the latest 3 months for the seasonally adjusted CPIs are shown in Table 3. The rates of change in the original and the seasonally adjusted Composite CPI and the underlying inflation rate are presented graphically in Chart 1.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Monthly Report on the Consumer Price Index". Users can browse and download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1060001&scode=270).

For enquiries about the CPIs, please contact the Consumer Price Index Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7374 or email: cpi@censtatd.gov.hk).

Government appoints directors to HKEX Board

The Government announced today (February 20) that the Financial

Secretary had reappointed Mr Carlson Tong Ka-shing and Mr Joseph Yam Chi-kwong as members of the Board of Directors of the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX), and appointed Ms Ding Chen as a member of the Board of Directors of the HKEX. The reappointments and appointment will take effect from the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the HKEX in 2025 until the conclusion of its AGM in 2027, a term of around two years.

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, said, "Ms Ding has extensive experience in the financial services industry, in particular the asset and wealth management sector. She has a deep understanding of the securities market and wide connections with market participants, which are conducive to the diverse development of the HKEX in meeting the needs of different issuers and investors, as well as enhancing Hong Kong's status and function as a global financing hub."

Mr Chan also expressed his sincere gratitude to the retiring director, Ms Nisa Leung, for her contributions to the development of the HKEX over the years.

The above appointments are made in accordance with Section 77 of the Securities and Futures Ordinance. The Board of Directors of the HKEX comprises a maximum of six directors appointed by the Financial Secretary, a maximum of six directors elected by shareholders, and the Chief Executive of the HKEX. Other incumbent directors appointed by the Financial Secretary are Mr Chan Kin-por, Mr Herbert Chia Pun-kok and Mrs Susan Chow Woo Mo-fong.

DH to implement Primary Dental Co-care Pilot Scheme for Adolescents on March 20

The Department of Health (DH) announced today (February 20) that the Primary Dental Co-care Pilot Scheme for Adolescents (PDCC) will be implemented on March 20. By providing Government subsidies with co-payment arrangements, the PDCC incentivises adolescents to seek dental check-ups at private dental clinics and establish regular oral check-up habits. Around 200 registered dentists have applied for enrolment in the PDCC to provide services in more than 220 healthcare service locations, where more than half of the co-payment amount was set at \$200 or below.

The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the PDCC would be implemented in 2025 to encourage the prevention of dental diseases among adolescents. The Government released the final report of the Working Group on Oral Health and Dental Care in December last year which recommended development strategies including adoption of the approach to promote

prevention-oriented primary oral healthcare among citizens across all age groups. The PDCC is one of the strategies that serves as an interface with the School Dental Care Service by providing partial subsidies for dental check-up services for adolescents to foster their long-term partnership with registered dentists in the private sector and enable them to build a life-long habit of regular dental check-ups.

Adolescents from age 13 to 17 (or will reach the age of 13 in the calendar year when applying to join the PDCC) holding a valid Hong Kong Identity Card and have enrolled in the Electronic Health Record Sharing System (eHealth) are eligible to join the PDCC. Eligible adolescents can receive subsidised services once every calendar year. While the Government will provide a subsidy of \$200 each time, participants have to pay a co-payment fee as determined by the dentists they selected. The co-payment for the subsidised services each time recommended by the Government is \$200.

â€‹The scope of subsidised services include:

- Dental check-up;
- Oral health risk assessment;
- Dental scaling;
- Personalised self-care advice on oral care;
- Fluoride application as risk-based follow-up; and
- Check-up report.

The DH held its first online briefing session for registered dentists on February 4 to introduce the background, contents and registration procedures of the PDCC. More briefings will be held to encourage more dentists to join the PDCC. The DH has been actively processing and vetting applications with complete sets of supporting documents submitted. An approved registered dentists list will be uploaded to the PDCC webpage (www.communitydental.gov.hk/en/pdcc/dentist_search.html) on March 6. In order to promote the transparency of related dental service charges under the PDCC, other than the co-payment fee, the dentists list on the PDCC webpage will also show the fees for X-ray examinations, tooth fillings and tooth extractions as charged by the dentists under the PDCC, for the general public's reference and choice.

Adolescents and their parents who are interested in joining the PDCC can refer to the dentists list on the PDCC webpage starting from March 6. They can contact the relevant clinic and make an appointment after finding a dentist of their choice and receive the subsidised services on or after March 20.