

Person in custody found unconscious dies in hospital

A 56-year-old male person in custody who was found unconscious in Hei Ling Chau Correctional Institution died in a public hospital today (January 4).

At 9.16am today, the person in custody suddenly felt physical discomfort inside the dining hall and was immediately sent to the institution hospital for examination. During the course of examination by the institution medical officer, he was found unconscious. First aid treatment was immediately applied and a helicopter was called to send him to a public hospital for further rescue. His condition deteriorated and he was certified dead at 10.43am today.

The case has been reported to the Police. A death inquest will be held by the Coroner's Court.

The person in custody, who had a drug abuse history of more than 30 years, was sentenced to imprisonment for the offence of trafficking in a dangerous drug in May 2015.

Woman sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

A 23-year-old woman was fined \$3,000 by the Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (January 4) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) (the Regulation).

The woman was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, she left the place of quarantine and went to the Immigration Department on June 23, 2020, to handle issues relating to her visa without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. She was charged with contravening sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was fined \$3,000 by the Fanling Magistrates' Courts.

Pursuant to the Regulation, starting from February 8, 2020, save for exempted persons, all persons who have stayed in the Mainland, Macao or Taiwan in the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong, regardless of their nationality or travel documents, will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Moreover, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E), starting from

December 25, 2020, all persons arriving at Hong Kong (either via the airport or land boundary control points) who have stayed in places outside China on the day of arrival at Hong Kong or during the 21 days before that day have to undergo compulsory quarantine for 21 days in designated quarantine hotels. Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said the sentences send a clear message to the community that breaching a compulsory quarantine order is a criminal offence that the Government will not tolerate, and solemnly reminded the public to comply with the Regulation. As of today, a total of 93 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to 14 weeks or a fine of \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.

Public housing resident sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment for neglecting to declare property ownership

A spokesman for the Housing Department reminded residents of public rental housing (PRH) estates to declare truthfully their income and assets.

A PRH resident living at Ping Shek Estate declared on a 2020 Income and Asset Declaration Form that he did not have ownership of land and landed property, and that his total household net asset value did not exceed 100 times the prevailing PRH income limit of \$3,100,000. A subsequent investigation revealed that the resident owned land at Tai Po and was granted a Building Licence in 2018 and a Certificate of Compliance in 2020 by the Lands Department, and that the value of the land and landed property was \$16,000,000. His family was therefore ineligible for living in the PRH unit. He was prosecuted by the Housing Department for neglecting to furnish information specified in the Income and Asset Declaration Form, contrary to Section 27(a) of the Housing Ordinance.

The defendant was convicted by the presiding magistrate in Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today and was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment after considering the gravity of the offence.

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The spokesman said that households living in PRH should accurately complete the income and asset declaration forms, which are used for laying the foundation for the assessment of rent and residents' eligibilities for continuing residence. Before making the declarations, households should read the contents and completion guidelines of the income and asset declaration

form carefully and compute their income and assets in accordance with the methods specified. Otherwise, they may be prosecuted for making a false statement knowingly, contrary to Section 26(1)(a) of the Housing Ordinance (if convicted, the maximum penalty is a \$50,000 fine and imprisonment for six months) or be prosecuted for neglecting to furnish information as specified in a declaration form, contrary to Section 27(a) of the Housing Ordinance (if convicted, the maximum penalty is a \$25,000 fine and imprisonment for three months).

[FEHD launches stepped-up year-end clean-up campaign \(with photo\)](#)

In light of the latest developments of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (January 4) commenced a stepped-up year-end clean-up campaign six weeks before the Lunar New Year, aiming to arouse public awareness of maintaining personal hygiene and cleanliness in the community as well as consolidate the efforts of keeping Hong Kong clean and containing the pandemic.

An FEHD spokesman said, "The FEHD has launched this two-week stepped-up campaign prior to the territory wide annual year-end clean-up campaign in light of the ongoing pandemic. During these two weeks, street cleaning operations at complaint hotspots will be enhanced in all districts. The territory-wide year-end clean-up campaign will commence on January 18, following the stepped-up campaign."

He added, "During the stepped-up campaign, the FEHD will remind residents, shop owners and operators of food premises to pay attention to hygiene conditions in public areas through distributing pamphlets, giving advice and issuing warnings. Stringent enforcement actions will also be taken against offenders."

In collaboration with other government departments, the FEHD is rolling out the territory-wide anti-rodent campaign in two phases this year. The first phase was launched today and will run until March 12. The FEHD will continue to adopt multi-pronged strategies, including improving environmental hygiene and stepping up rodent disinfection and enforcement actions, for carrying out rodent prevention and control work.

To tie in with the commencement of the stepped-up campaign, a dedicated thematic website on the year-end clean-up campaign was launched today to consolidate the efforts and work of the FEHD's clean-up campaign. Regular updates of the work on anti-pandemic, rodent prevention and control, and handling of shop front extension problem will be reported. Meanwhile, the website will also provide useful information and advices on environmental

hygiene for gaining public collaboration and understanding. For more information, please visit the FEHD website: www.fehd.gov.hk.

The spokesman stressed that maintaining a clean and hygienic community hinges on the co-operation and active participation of everyone. He called for the concerted efforts of every member of the public to maintain environmental hygiene and fight the virus together.



Provisional statistics of retail sales for November 2020

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released the latest figures on retail sales today (January 4).

â€‹ The value of total retail sales in November 2020, provisionally estimated at \$28.7 billion, decreased by 4.0% compared with the same month in 2019. The revised estimate of the value of total retail sales in October 2020 decreased by 8.7% compared with a year earlier. For the first eleven months of 2020 taken together, it was provisionally estimated that the value of total retail sales decreased by 25.3% compared with the same period in 2019.

â€‹ After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, the provisional estimate of the volume of total retail sales in November 2020 decreased by 4.7% compared with a year earlier. The revised estimate of the volume of total retail sales in October 2020 decreased by 9.2% compared with a year earlier. For the first eleven months of 2020 taken together, the provisional estimate of the total retail sales decreased by 26.6% in volume compared with the same period in 2019.

â€‹ Analysed by broad type of retail outlet in descending order of the provisional estimate of the value of sales and comparing November 2020 with November 2019, the value of sales of commodities in department stores decreased by 12.4%. This was followed by sales of food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (-8.8% in value); jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts (-16.1%); wearing apparel (-13.3%); medicines and cosmetics (-34.8%); fuels (-5.5%); footwear, allied products and other clothing accessories (-18.3%); books, newspapers, stationery and gifts (-17.7%); Chinese drugs and herbs

(-15.2%); and optical shops (-16.5%).

On the other hand, the value of sales of electrical goods and other consumer durable goods, not elsewhere classified increased by 22.0% in November 2020 over a year earlier. This was followed by sales of commodities in supermarkets (+1.6% in value); other consumer goods, not elsewhere classified (+15.3%); motor vehicles and parts (+22.2%); and furniture and fixtures (+15.1%).

Based on the seasonally adjusted series, the provisional estimate of the value of total retail sales increased by 5.6% in the three months ending November 2020 compared with the preceding three-month period, while the provisional estimate of the volume of total retail sales increased by 5.4%.

These retail sales statistics measure the sales receipts in respect of goods sold by local retail establishments and are primarily intended for gauging the short-term business performance of the local retail sector. Data on retail sales are collected from local retail establishments through the Monthly Survey of Retail Sales (MRS). Local retail establishments with and without physical shops are covered in MRS and their sales, both through conventional shops and online channels, are included in the retail sales statistics.

The retail sales statistics cover consumer spending on goods but not on services (such as those on housing, catering, medical care and health services, transport and communication, financial services, education and entertainment) which account for over 50% of the overall consumer spending. Moreover, they include spending on goods in Hong Kong by visitors but exclude spending outside Hong Kong by Hong Kong residents. Hence they should not be regarded as indicators for measuring overall consumer spending.

Users interested in the trend of overall consumer spending should refer to the data series of private consumption expenditure (PCE), which is a major component of the Gross Domestic Product published at quarterly intervals. Compiled from a wide range of data sources, PCE covers consumer spending on both goods (including goods purchased from all channels) and services by Hong Kong residents whether locally or abroad. Please refer to the C&SD publication "Gross Domestic Product (Quarterly)" for more details.

Commentary

A government spokesman said that the year-on-year decline in retail sales narrowed further in November, primarily due to the notable increase in sales at retail outlets of consumer durable goods.

Looking ahead, the spokesman pointed out that as inbound tourism remains at a standstill, and the fourth wave of the local epidemic has weighed on local consumption sentiment since the latter part of November, the business environment of the retail trade will remain challenging in the near term. The Government will monitor the developments closely.

Further information

Table 1 presents the revised figures on value index and value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for October 2020 as well as the provisional figures for November 2020. The provisional figures on the value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet as well as the corresponding year-on-year changes for the first eleven months of 2020 taken together are also shown.

Table 2 presents the revised figures on volume index of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for October 2020 as well as the provisional figures for November 2020. The provisional figures on year-on-year changes for the first eleven months of 2020 taken together are also shown.

Table 3 shows the movements of the value and volume of total retail sales in terms of the year-on-year rate of change for a month compared with the same month in the preceding year based on the original series, and in terms of the rate of change for a three-month period compared with the preceding three-month period based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The classification of retail establishments 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 Monthly Survey of Retail Sales". Users can download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp320.jsp?productCode=B1080003). Alternatively, the historical series of retail sales statistics can be downloaded in the form of a statistical table at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp320.jsp?productCode=D5600089).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Distribution Services Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7400; email: mrs@censtatd.gov.hk).