

# Pharmacy and its director convicted of supplying unsafe surgical masks

A pharmacy and its director were convicted and fined \$5,000 each today (March 10) at Eastern Magistrates' Courts for supplying unsafe surgical masks in contravention of the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance (CGSO).

In view of the development of the COVID-19 epidemic, Customs has conducted a territory-wide operation codenamed "Guardian" since January 27 last year to conduct spot checks and enforcement operations on common protective items, and test-purchased the type of surgical mask concerned. After investigation, Customs confirmed that the total bacterial count of the surgical mask sold by the pharmacy involved exceeded the maximum permitted limit by 0.4 times, which failed to comply with the general safety requirements of the CGSO.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the CGSO. Members of the public should observe the following tips when purchasing and using surgical masks:

- Check the trade descriptions of the surgical masks' packages during transactions;
- Check carefully before wearing the surgical masks and stop using the masks if they have stains or odd smells;
- Avoid buying or using loosely packed surgical masks;
- Pay attention to the proper way of using surgical masks;
- Change surgical masks at a suitable time;
- Store surgical masks in dry places; and
- Purchase surgical masks at reputable retail shops.

Under the CGSO, it is an offence to supply, manufacture or import consumer goods unless the goods comply with the general safety requirements for consumer goods. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year on first conviction, and \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years on subsequent convictions.

Customs attaches great importance to the trade descriptions and safety of surgical masks. The "Guardian" operation is ongoing to ensure that the surgical masks being sold in the market comply with the CGSO and the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO). Law enforcement action will be taken immediately if any suspected violations are detected.

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Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the CGSO or the TDO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).

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## **Tender amounts submitted for site at the Peak**

The Lands Department announced today (March 10) that in respect of the tender for the site Rural Building Lot No. 1222 at Nos. 9 and 11 Mansfield Road, the Peak, Hong Kong, which was awarded on February 9 to the successful tenderer, Active Pursuit Limited (parent companies: Wharf Development Limited, Boswell Holdings Ltd, Cheung Chung Kiu, Chan Hoi Wan and Lau Luen Hung, Thomas), on a 50-year land grant at a premium of \$7,250,000,000, the tender amounts submitted by the unsuccessful tenderers in descending order are published on an anonymous basis as follows:

- (1) \$6,113,000,000
- (2) \$5,520,000,000
- (3) \$4,460,000,000
- (4) \$4,350,000,000

The information disclosed in this press release is for information only.

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## **Effective Exchange Rate Index**

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 is 101.6 (down 0.3 against yesterday's index).

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## **Fraudulent website related to China CITIC Bank International Limited**

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by China CITIC Bank International Limited on fraudulent website, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the website concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the website should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

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## [eMPF Platform Company Limited established](#)

The Government announced today (March 10) the establishment of the eMPF Platform Company Limited (the Company) by the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority (MPFA) as its wholly owned subsidiary to take forward the eMPF Platform project (the Project).

The Company is established pursuant to section 6DA of the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Ordinance (Cap. 485) to develop, build and operate the eMPF Platform. The Project is a major reform initiative of the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) System to standardise, streamline and automate the administration processes of the MPF schemes for the benefit of various stakeholders, including about 300 000 employers and over 4 million scheme members.

"By capitalising on technology advancement and providing a common electronic platform for handling scheme administration work of the MPF System, the eMPF Platform will improve operational efficiency, reduce human errors and paper-based transactions, enhance user experience and lower scheme administration costs. The Project goes beyond system enhancement and going digital for scheme members, employers, trustees and the MPFA, but that it also seeks to build a major financial infrastructure that will reshape the operating landscape of the MPF System and add fresh impetus to the sustainable development and technology capability of the retirement planning industry," said the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan.

"The Company carries an important public mission and takes charge of the Project's implementation. With the wealth of experience and expertise on the Board of Directors, the Company will act fast and spare no efforts in bringing the Project to the next key milestones," Mr Chan added.

The Company is supervised by its Board of Directors approved by the Financial Secretary and the MPFA. Mrs Ayesha Macpherson Lau, who will assume the office of chairmanship of the MPFA on March 17, 2021, is appointed as the Chairperson and Non-executive Director of the Company. There are 12 other directors appointed to the Company, including representatives from the Government, the MPFA and the Company, as well as experts from the fields of legal and accountancy professions, business, information technology, and the

pension/trust industry. The membership list is at the Annex.

Mrs Lau, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Company, said, "With the establishment of the Company, the Project has reached a new milestone and officially entered the development stage. The MPFA and the Company will continue to take forward the Project with dedication and commitment, with a view to reforming the MPF System towards a new digital MPF era."

The development of the eMPF Platform is progressing according to schedule. The building of the Platform is targeted for completion by the end of 2022 at the earliest. Subject to an orderly transition by trustees in batches starting from 2023, the eMPF Platform would come into full operation around 2025.