

Tuen Mun Hospital announces passing away of COVID-19 patient

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH) today (February 2) announced that a patient confirmed with COVID-19 passed away today.

A 78-year-old male patient (case number: 8443), who tested positive for COVID-19, was admitted to TMH for isolation treatment on December 23 last year. His condition continued to deteriorate. He was later transferred to the Intensive Care Unit and eventually succumbed at 10.08am today.

The hospital is saddened by the passing away of the patient and will offer necessary assistance to his family.

Including the above patient, 178 COVID-19 patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

Exchange Fund Bills tender results

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

Exchange Fund bills tender results:

Tender date	: February 2, 2021
Paper on offer	: EF Bills
Issue number	: Q2105
Issue date	: February 3, 2021
Maturity date	: May 5, 2021
Amount applied	: HK\$105,345 MN
Amount allotted	: HK\$36,947 MN
Average yield accepted	: 0.06 PCT
Highest yield accepted	: 0.07 PCT
Pro rata ratio*	: About 65 PCT
Average tender yield	: 0.09 PCT

Tender date	: February 2, 2021
Paper on offer	: EF Bills

Issue number	: H2134
Issue date	: February 3, 2021
Maturity date	: August 4, 2021
Amount applied	: HK\$50,445 MN
Amount allotted	: HK\$11,000 MN
Average yield accepted	: 0.06 PCT
Highest yield accepted	: 0.06 PCT
Pro rata ratio*	: About 93 PCT
Average tender yield	: 0.09 PCT

*"Pro rata ratio" refers to the average percentage of allotment with respect to each tender participant's tendered amount at the "highest yield accepted" level.

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tenders to be held in the week beginning – February 8, 2021:

Tender date	: February 9, 2021
Paper on offer	: EF Bills
Issue number	: Q2106
Issue date	: February 10, 2021
Maturity date	: May 12, 2021
Tenor	: 91 Days
Amount on offer	: HK\$40,801 MN

Tender date	: February 9, 2021
Paper on offer	: EF Bills
Issue number	: H2135
Issue date	: February 10, 2021
Maturity date	: August 11, 2021
Tenor	: 182 Days
Amount on offer	: HK\$10,000 MN

[Land Registry releases statistics for January](#)

The Land Registry today (February 2) released its statistics for January 2021.

Land registration

* The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in January was 6,212 (-18.2 per cent compared with December 2020 but +64.5 per cent compared with January 2020)

* The 12-month moving average for January was 6,313 (3.3 per cent above the 12-month moving average for December 2020 and 3.8 per cent above that for January 2020)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in January was \$66.8 billion (-4.9 per cent compared with December 2020 but +130.1 per cent compared with January 2020)

* Among the sale and purchase agreements, 4,562 were for residential units (-24.8 per cent compared with December 2020 but +65.2 per cent compared with January 2020)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$39.7 billion (-32.3 per cent compared with December 2020 but +60.4 per cent compared with January 2020)

Statistics on sales of residential units do not include sale and purchase agreements relating to sales of units under the Home Ownership Scheme, the Private Sector Participation Scheme and the Tenants Purchase Scheme unless the premium of the unit concerned has been paid after the sale restriction period.

Figures on sale and purchase agreements received for the past 12 months, the year-on-year rate of change and breakdown figures on residential sales have also been released.

As deeds may not be lodged with the Land Registry until up to 30 days after the transaction, these statistics generally relate to land transactions in the previous month.

Land search

* The number of searches of land registers made by the public in January was 446,139 (+8.3 per cent compared with December 2020 and +30.4 per cent compared with January 2020)

The statistics cover searches made at the counter, through the self-service terminals and via the Integrated Registration Information System Online Services.

Illegal worker jailed

A Vietnamese illegal worker was jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (February 1).

During a joint operation conducted by the Immigration Department (ImmD), the Hong Kong Police Force and the Labour Department codenamed "Champion" on November 18 last year, enforcement officers raided a massage parlour in Wan Chai. A Vietnamese woman, aged 26, was arrested while working as a masseuse.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. She pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening on vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers who are arrested during any operation, with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threats and coercion in the recruitment phase and the

nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

EPD collaborates with Malaysian environment authority to detect illegal transboundary movements of waste

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD), through cross-border collaboration, successfully detected a case of illegal export of waste electrical wire, aluminium waste and copper waste from Hong Kong to Malaysia. The exporter concerned, Fortune Int'l Enviro-Resources Limited, was convicted and fined \$28,000 by Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (February 2) for contravening the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO).

A spokesman for the EPD said the department has been maintaining close contact and exchanging intelligence with overseas law enforcement agencies with a view to jointly combating illegal transboundary movements of waste. Last October, the EPD received a report from the Malaysian environment authority regarding the illegal export of waste to Malaysia by a Hong Kong exporter. The EPD immediately conducted an in-depth investigation with the assistance of the Malaysian environment authority in the collection of evidence. It was confirmed that the exporter concerned illegally exported a shipment of about 23 tonnes of waste, purported to contain "metal" but actually containing waste electrical wire, waste aluminium, waste copper and other waste. The EPD thus initiated prosecution against the exporter under the WDO.

The spokesman stressed that, in accordance with the WDO, anyone intending to import or export waste metals, including aluminium waste and copper waste, should obtain a permit issued by the EPD, unless such waste is uncontaminated and is imported or exported for the purposes of recycling, reprocessing, recovery or reuse. Otherwise, it will constitute an offence. In addition, exporters should comply with the relevant laws and regulations of the importing countries, including obtaining prior approval from the relevant authorities of importing countries. The EPD will spare no efforts to collaborating with overseas law enforcement agencies to combat illegal waste import and export activities, with a view to preventing Hong Kong from becoming a distribution hub for illegal import and export of waste or the disposal of imported waste at Hong Kong landfills.

The spokesman reminded importers and exporters of the waste recycling trade not to illegally import (including import into or transshipment through Hong Kong) or export controlled waste. According to the WDO, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment; for subsequent offences, offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and two years' imprisonment.