

Proprietor fined for violation of safety legislation

River Trade Terminal Co Ltd was fined \$80,000 at Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts today (June 18) for violation of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance. The prosecution was launched by the Labour Department.

The case involved a fatal accident that occurred on April 3, 2019, at a container terminal in Tuen Mun. While a worker was walking past a vehicle access in the container terminal, she was struck by a reversing reach stacker and died.

Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade in April 2020

Further to the external merchandise trade statistics in value terms for April 2020 released earlier on, the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (June 18) the volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for that month.

In April 2020, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods and imports of goods decreased by 2.7% and 5.3% respectively over April 2019.

Comparing the first four months of 2020 with the same period in 2019, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods and imports of goods decreased by 7.4% and 8.5% respectively.

Comparing the three-month period ending April 2020 with the preceding three months on a seasonally adjusted basis, the volume of total exports of goods and imports of goods decreased by 0.3% and 3.8% respectively.

Changes in volume of external merchandise trade are derived from changes in external merchandise trade value with the effect of price changes discounted.

Comparing April 2020 with April 2019, the prices of total exports of goods and imports of goods decreased by 1.3% and 1.4% respectively.

As regards price changes in the first four months of 2020 over the same

period in 2019, the prices of total exports of goods and imports of goods decreased by 0.8% and 0.6% respectively.

Price changes in external merchandise trade are reflected by changes in unit value indices of external merchandise trade, which are compiled based on average unit values or, for certain commodities, specific price data.

The terms of trade index is derived from the ratio of price index of total exports of goods to that of imports of goods. Compared with the same periods in 2019, the index increased by 0.1% in April 2020, whereas it decreased by 0.2% in the first four months of 2020.

Changes in the unit value and volume of total exports of goods by main destination are shown in Table 1.

Comparing April 2020 with April 2019, a double-digit decline of 22.7% was recorded for the total export volume to the USA. On the other hand, the total export volume to the mainland of China (the Mainland) (9.6%), the Netherlands (11.9%), Japan (15.1%) and Taiwan (22.1%) increased.

Over the same period of comparison, the total export prices to all main destinations decreased: Japan (-3.6%), the USA (-1.4%), the Netherlands (-1.2%), Taiwan (-0.7%) and the Mainland (-0.2%).

Changes in the unit value and volume of imports of goods by main supplier are shown in Table 2.

Comparing April 2020 with April 2019, double-digit declines were recorded for the import volume from Japan (-11.7%) and the Mainland (-10.4%). On the other hand, the import volume from Singapore (19.7%), Korea (20.2%) and Taiwan (35.3%) increased.

Over the same period of comparison, the import prices from Singapore (-7.5%), Korea (-6.4%), Taiwan (-4.9%) and the Mainland (-1.0%) decreased. On the other hand, the import prices from Japan increased by 1.2%.

Further information

Details of the above statistics are published in the April 2020 issue of "Hong Kong Merchandise Trade Index Numbers". Users can download the publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp230.jsp?productCode=B1020006).

Enquiries on merchandise trade indices may be directed to the Trade Analysis Section (1) of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 4918).

Chain volume measures of Gross Domestic Product by economic activity for first quarter of 2020

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (June 18) the preliminary figures of chain volume measures of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by economic activity for the first quarter of 2020.

GDP figures by economic activity show the value of production in respect of individual economic activities. The value of production is measured by net output or value added, which is calculated by deducting intermediate input consumed in the process of production from the gross value of output. Volume measures of GDP by economic activity, expressed in terms of chain volume measures net of the effect of price changes, enable analysis of the output growth profiles of individual economic sectors in real terms.

According to the preliminary figures, overall GDP decreased by 8.9% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, compared with the 3.0% decrease in the fourth quarter of 2019.

Analysed by constituent services sector and on a year-on-year comparison, net output in respect of all the services activities taken together decreased by 8.8% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, compared with the decrease of 2.4% in the fourth quarter of 2019. In the first quarter of 2020, the net output of a number of services sectors dropped visibly from a year earlier. The threat of COVID-19 seriously disrupted the regional supply chains and related trading activities. Industries related to consumption and tourism were also hard hit. Furthermore, the decline in the transportation industry was enlarged amid sharply reduced passenger and cargo flows.

Net output in the import and export, wholesale and retail trades sector plunged by 20.8% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, after the decrease of 8.4% in the fourth quarter of 2019.

The fall in the net output in the accommodation services (covering hotels, guesthouses, boarding houses and other establishments providing short term accommodation) and food services sector enlarged further to 46.3% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, after the fall of 23.2% in the fourth quarter of 2019.

Net output in the transportation, storage, postal and courier services sector plunged by 32.6% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, following the decline of 8.1% in the fourth quarter of 2019.

Net output in the real estate, professional and business services sector decreased by 4.8% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, as against the marginal increase of 0.2% in the fourth quarter of

2019.

Net output in the public administration, social and personal services sector dropped by 2.8% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, as against the growth of 2.5% in the fourth quarter of 2019.

Net output in the information and communications sector increased by 1.3% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 over a year earlier, compared with the growth of 2.8% in the fourth quarter of 2019.

Net output in the financing and insurance sector increased by 2.7% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 over a year earlier, compared with the 2.4% rise in the fourth quarter of 2019.

As for sectors other than the services sectors, net output in the local manufacturing sector dropped by 4.6% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, compared with the decrease of 0.5% in the fourth quarter of 2019.

Net output in the electricity, gas and water supply, and waste management sector decreased by 14.4% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, compared with the decrease of 1.1% in the fourth quarter of 2019.

Net output in the construction sector decreased by 9.0% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier, after the decrease of 6.6% in the fourth quarter of 2019.

Further information

The year-on-year percentage changes of GDP by economic activity in real terms from the first quarter of 2019 to the first quarter of 2020 are shown in Table 1. For enquiries about statistics on GDP by economic activity, please call the National Income Branch (2) of the C&SD at telephone number 3903 7005.

Figures of chain volume measures of GDP by economic activity for the first quarter of 2020 are only preliminary at this stage. When more data become available, the preliminary figures will be revised accordingly. More detailed figures can also be found at the Hong Kong Statistics section of the C&SD website (www.censtatd.gov.hk).

Government to double cash incentives under Green Lifestyle Local Tour

Incentive Scheme

To foster local economic revival and relaunch the tourism industry, the Government will double the cash incentives for travel agents organising green lifestyle local tours, so as to boost local tourism and encourage the public to get close to nature and practise green lifestyles, thereby supporting tourism and related sectors including catering and transport.

The Government will enhance the Green Lifestyle Local Tour Incentive Scheme, which was announced late last year. The cash incentive amount per tour participant served by a travel agent will be increased from the original \$100 to \$200. The quota of tour participants for each travel agent to apply for cash incentives will also be increased from the original 500 to 1 000. These enhancement measures will be effective tomorrow (June 19).

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said, "We believe the revival of tourism will begin with the local market, and therefore we encourage Hong Kong people to be tourists in our own city to energise the local community. With the epidemic subsiding locally, the Government will relax the social distancing measures under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance starting from tomorrow. This includes relaxing the number of persons allowed in group gatherings in public places from eight to 50 under the group gatherings regulation (Cap. 599G), offering a great opportunity to relaunch local tourism activities.

"Under the further enhancement measures, the maximum amount of cash incentives available to each travel agent will be increased from \$50,000 to \$200,000 to encourage them to organise more local tours. At the same time, as the scheme requires local tours to incorporate catering and transportation elements as well as engage accredited tourist guides or tour escorts, the measures can also benefit the relevant sectors."

Mr Yau said that the Holiday at Home campaign launched by the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) earlier this week encourages Hong Kong people to be tourists in their own city and rediscover the beauty of Hong Kong from a new perspective. With the staunch support of the local tourism, retail and catering industries, the campaign provides different offers to boost local consumption. Once it is possible for visitors from a certain market to travel to Hong Kong, the HKTB will appeal to those visitors by extending to them the travel and local spending information and offers featured in this campaign, together with attractive flight-and-hotel packages.

With the support of the Environment Bureau, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau earlier rolled out two enhancement measures for the Green Lifestyle Local Tour Incentive Scheme, namely extending the deadline from the end of July 2020 to the end of December 2020, and increasing the commitment for the scheme from the original \$50 million to \$100 million.

Application details of the Green Lifestyle Local Tour Incentive Scheme

are available on the website of the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (www.tichk.org/).

LC: Opening remarks by CS for proposed resolution on appointment of the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal

Following is the opening remarks (translated from Chinese) made by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, in moving the proposed resolution under Article 73(7) of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and section 7A of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484) on appointment of the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal in the Legislative Council meeting today (June 18):

Mr President,

I move that the motion under my name, as printed in the Agenda, be passed, that is, this Council endorses the appointment of the Honourable Mr Justice Andrew Cheung Kui-nung as the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal (CFA).

Constitutional and statutory framework

The CFA is the final appellate court in Hong Kong, hearing both civil and criminal appeals. The Chief Justice is the President of the CFA and the head of the Judiciary. He is charged with the administration of the Judiciary and the execution of various statutory powers and functions vested in him.

Article 88 of the Basic Law provides that judges of the courts of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) shall be appointed by the Chief Executive on the recommendation of an independent commission composed of local judges, persons from the legal profession and eminent persons from other sectors. The Judicial Officers Recommendation Commission (JORC) is the statutory body constituted by the Judicial Officers Recommendation Commission Ordinance (Cap. 92) to perform the functions of the independent commission referred to in Article 88 of the Basic Law.

In the case of the appointment of the Chief Justice, Article 90 of the Basic Law provides that the Chief Executive shall, in addition to following the procedures prescribed in Article 88 of the Basic Law, obtain the endorsement of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and report such appointment to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress for the record.

Pursuant to Article 92 of the Basic Law, judges of the HKSAR shall be chosen on the basis of their judicial and professional qualities. Further, Article 90 of the Basic Law stipulates that the Chief Justice of the CFA of the HKSAR shall be a Chinese citizen who is a permanent resident of the HKSAR with no right of abode in any foreign country.

The Judicial Officers Recommendation Commission Ordinance stipulates that the JORC should consist of the Chief Justice as the Chairman, the Secretary for Justice (SJ) and seven other members appointed by the Chief Executive. They include two judges, one barrister appointed after consultation with the Bar Council of the Hong Kong Bar Association, one solicitor appointed after consultation with the Council of the Law Society of Hong Kong, and three persons not connected in any way with the practice of law.

The current appointment

The incumbent Chief Justice, Mr Geoffrey Ma, will retire on January 11, 2021. The JORC held three meetings during the period from November 2019 to January 2020 to decide on the selection procedures and the appointment criteria for shortlisting candidates suitable for appointment as the next Chief Justice, and to consider the recommendation of a suitable candidate for such appointment. Having completed the selection process in accordance with the agreed procedures, the JORC has recommended to the Chief Executive the appointment of Mr Justice Cheung, Permanent Judge of the CFA, as the Chief Justice of the CFA with effect from January 11, 2021.

Mr Justice Cheung was a pre-eminent barrister when he joined the Judiciary in 2001. He was appointed the Chief Judge of the High Court in 2011, leading the High Court both judicially and administratively. He was later appointed as a Permanent Judge of the CFA in October 2018.

Mr Justice Cheung is a judge of high integrity and is widely respected both within the Judiciary and the legal profession. Mr Justice Cheung is a highly competent judge. He has written many important and landmark judgments on major and complicated cases, including constitutional and public law cases. As the Chief Judge of the High Court from 2011 to 2018, Mr Justice Cheung had to discharge very onerous administrative duties. He is also the key advisor to the Chief Justice on strategic matters and court operation issues. It is evident that Mr Justice Cheung possesses rich administrative experience and exemplary leadership qualities to discharge the responsibilities as the head of the Judiciary.

The Chief Executive has accepted the recommendation of the JORC on the appointment of Mr Justice Cheung as the Chief Justice of the CFA. Subject to the endorsement of this Council, the appointment shall take effect on January 11, 2021.

In accordance with the procedures previously endorsed by the the House Committee of LegCo, the Government informed the House Committee on March 24, 2020 that the Chief Executive had accepted the recommendation of the JORC on

this appointment. Representatives from the Government and the Secretary to the JORC attended the meeting of the Subcommittee on Proposed Senior Judicial Appointment on May 26, 2020 and answered Members' questions. I would like to thank Dr Honourable Priscilla Leung Mei-fun, Chairman of the Subcommittee, and other Members of the Subcommittee for their support of the proposed appointment.

With these remarks, I invite Members to endorse the appointment. Thank you.