

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, June 8, 2020 is 107.9 (same as last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, June 6, 2020 was 107.9 (same as last Friday's index).

Government announces details of Cash Payout Scheme

The Government announced today (June 8) that the Cash Payout Scheme will open for registration on June 21, 2020. Hong Kong permanent residents aged 18 or above on or before March 31, 2021, may register electronically or use a paper form to receive \$10,000. Registration will close on December 31, 2021.

The public may choose to register through 21 participating banks to have the sum deposited to their sole-name bank account; those who wish to receive the payment with a cheque can register with Hongkong Post and collect it in person at the post office. Banks will start accepting electronic registrations from 7am on June 21.

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, said, "Members of the public may register electronically through banks if they have a sole-name bank account. It is the fastest and most convenient way to register and also the quickest way to receive the payment. Payment for electronic registrations submitted through banks in June will be deposited simultaneously into the bank accounts from around July 8. People who submit electronic registrations on or after July 1 will receive the payment about one week after registration."

People may also submit a paper registration form (Form 1) to banks, but the date of receiving payment will be handled in batches according to the arrangement for a paper form registration. If they wish to receive payment by order cheque, they may submit a paper registration form (Form 2) to Hongkong Post or an electronic registration form at the Hongkong Post website (hongkongpost.hk). They may also submit paper registration forms to GPO Box No. 182020. No postage is needed if it is sent from Hong Kong.

Paper form registration will be conducted in three batches that commence at two-week intervals. The first batch (i.e. persons born in 1955 or before) may submit the forms from June 21, 2020, and receive payment from July 20.

From June 15, paper registration forms will be available for download from the websites of the participating retail banks, Hongkong Post and the

Scheme (www.cashpayout.gov.hk). They are also available at the bank branches, post offices, Home Affairs Enquiry Centres of the Home Affairs Department, District Social Welfare Offices of the Social Welfare Department, and Public Housing Estate Offices and Customer Service Centres of the Hong Kong Housing Authority.

About 1 000 branches of 20 participating retail banks and about 120 post offices over the territory will open from 9am to 5pm on June 21 to collect paper registration forms.

Mr Chan said, "It is simple and easy to register electronically through banks, and fastest in receiving payment. I hope this \$10,000 may help relieve people's financial burden and boost the economy with more consumption."

The public may browse the website of the Scheme or call 18 2020 to obtain detailed information on the Scheme.

CFS announces results of seasonal food surveillance on rice dumplings (second phase)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (June 8) announced that the test results of 36 rice dumpling samples collected under a recently completed seasonal food surveillance project on rice dumplings (second phase) were all satisfactory.

"The CFS announced the results of the seasonal food surveillance project on rice dumplings (first phase) at the end of last month. With the Tuen Ng Festival around the corner, the CFS has completed the second phase of the surveillance project. In conclusion, samples of rice dumplings from different food premises such as restaurants, food factories and other retail outlets (including online retailers) were collected for chemical, microbiological and nutrition content analyses. The chemical analyses included tests for colouring matters, preservatives, metallic contamination, mineral oil, antioxidants, sweeteners and pesticides. The microbiological analyses covered pathogenic bacteria including Salmonella, coagulase-positive staphylococci organisms, Clostridium perfringens and Bacillus cereus. For nutrition content analyses, contents such as protein, total fat, sodium and sugars of the samples were tested to see if the test results comply with their declared values on the nutrition labels," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The spokesman reminded members of the public to observe the following food safety tips in purchasing, preparing, storing and consuming rice dumplings:

Buying rice dumplings

- * Buy rice dumplings from reliable outlets;
- * When purchasing non-prepackaged rice dumplings, choose those that are securely wrapped in wrapping leaves; and
- * When purchasing prepackaged rice dumplings, check the expiry date and whether the packaging is intact.

Home-made rice dumplings

- * Buy wrapping leaves from reliable suppliers and avoid leaves that are unnaturally bright green or with chemical smells;
- * Choose healthier ingredients as fillings (e.g. dry beans, lean meat and mushrooms) by following the "3 Low 1 High" dietary principle of low fat, low sugar, low salt and high fibre;
- * Wash hands and utensils thoroughly before and after handling food; and
- * Handle raw and cooked food separately to avoid cross-contamination.

Storing and preparing rice dumplings

- * Consume rice dumplings as soon as possible and avoid prolonged storage;
- * Store rice dumplings at 4 degrees Celsius or below, or store them properly according to the instructions on the package if they are not consumed or cooked immediately;
- * Keep cooked rice dumplings that are not consumed immediately in a covered container and put them in the upper compartment of the refrigerator. Keep raw food in the lower compartment to prevent cross-contamination;
- * Reheat rice dumplings thoroughly until the core temperature reaches 75 degrees Celsius or above before consumption;
- * Do not reheat rice dumplings more than once; and
- * Consume reheated rice dumplings as soon as possible.

Consuming rice dumplings

- * Wash hands with running water and liquid soap, and rub for at least 20 seconds before consumption; and
- * Reduce seasonings such as soy sauce or granulated sugar during consumption.

The spokesman said, "Rice dumplings in general are relatively high in energy, fat and salt. During the festival, people should maintain a balanced diet, and consume rice dumplings moderately, with due consideration of their health condition. People are recommended to share rice dumplings with their family members and friends, as this not only enhances the festive atmosphere, but also allows them to taste rice dumplings of different flavours and avoid over-consumption. People are also advised to make use of nutrition labels on prepackaged food to compare their nutritional contents for healthier food choices."

He also reminded food manufacturers to purchase food ingredients from reliable suppliers, adhere to Good Manufacturing Practice for preparation of food products and comply with legal requirements when using food additives.

Man sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

A 58-year-old man was sentenced to immediate imprisonment for four weeks by the Shatin Magistrates' Courts today (June 8) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C).

The man was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he left the place of quarantine without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer and was stopped by staff of the Immigration Department at Shenzhen Bay Control Point on March 21. He was charged with contravening sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Shatin Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for four weeks.

A spokesman for the Department of Health (DH) said the sentence sends a clear message to the community that breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and that the Government will not tolerate such actions. The spokesman reiterated that compliance with quarantine orders is of paramount importance in Hong Kong's fight against COVID-19.

Pursuant to the Regulation, save for exempted persons, all persons who have stayed in the Mainland, Macao or Taiwan in the 14 days preceding their 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 March 19, all persons arriving from countries or territories outside China are also subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months. The DH solemnly reminds persons under quarantine to comply with the statutory requirements and conduct quarantine for 14 days.

US Dollar Liquidity Facility tender notice

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

US Dollar Liquidity Facility tender notice:

Tender date : June 10 (Wednesday)
Tender submission time : 9am to noon
Settlement date : June 11 (Thursday)
Repayment date : June 18 (Thursday)
Tenor : Seven Days
Amount on offer : US\$10,000 Million

Note: Licensed Banks interested in participating in the tender for the first time are encouraged to provide US dollar settlement instructions by email (settlementsection@hkma.gov.hk) to the HKMA's Settlement Team in advance, preferably two days prior to the tender. Required information includes name of corresponding bank, name of final beneficiary (must be the Licensed Bank participating in the tender), and account or CHIPS number of a US dollar bank account to be settled in the US. Such information needs to be provided once only, unless there is further change.