

An abnormally hot May

May 2020 was generally fine and hot in the first half of the month, while unsettled weather and occasional heavy showers set in in the latter half. Overall, the month was much hotter than usual. The monthly mean minimum temperature was 25.9 degrees, 1.8 degrees above the normal figure and the joint second highest on record for May. The monthly mean temperature of 27.7 degrees and the mean maximum temperature of 30.4 degrees were 1.8 degrees and 2.0 degrees above their corresponding normal figures respectively and both were the fifth highest on record for May. Moreover, the spring from March to May this year was exceptionally warm. The mean minimum temperature of 21.9 degrees, the mean temperature of 23.7 degrees and the mean maximum temperature of 26.4 degrees were the fourth, fifth and sixth highest on record for the same period respectively. May 2020 was also wetter than usual. The monthly rainfall was 352.5 millimetres, about 16 per cent above the normal figure of 304.7 millimetres. The accumulated rainfall recorded in the first five months of the year was 566.2 millimetres, about 12 per cent below the normal figure of 640.8 millimetres for the same period.

Under the dominance of the anticyclone aloft, except for a few isolated showers from May 8 to 10, the weather of Hong Kong was generally fine and hot on the first 10 days of the month. On May 11, it was fine and very hot during the day with the maximum temperature recorded at the Hong Kong Observatory soaring to 33.5 degrees, the highest of the month. A thundery rainband associated with a trough of low pressure moved across the coastal areas of Guangdong that night and brought heavy showers and severe squally thunderstorms to Hong Kong. More than 30 millimetres of rainfall were recorded over some parts of the New Territories. With the trough of low pressure moving southward and getting away from Hong Kong, local weather improved gradually on May 12 with sunny intervals in the afternoon.

Under the influence of a fresh to strong easterly airstream, the weather of Hong Kong was a mixture of sunshine and showers on May 13 and 14. With the gradual replacement of the easterly airstream by a southerly airstream, the weather of Hong Kong became generally fine and very hot from May 15 to 17. Affected by a trough of low pressure lingering over the coastal areas of Guangdong, local weather was mainly cloudy with occasional heavy showers and squally thunderstorms on May 18. About 50 millimetres of rainfall were recorded over Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. As the trough of low pressure moved away from the south China coast, showery activities on the next day receded with sunny periods during the day. With the setting in of a strong easterly airstream, the weather on May 20 turned mainly cloudy with a few showers and isolated thunderstorms.

Under the influence of a trough of low pressure over southern China, local weather was unsettled with occasional heavy showers and squally thunderstorms on May 21 and 22. More than 80 millimetres of rainfall were recorded over most parts of the territory on these two days and the rainfall even exceeded 120 millimetres over some parts of Hong Kong Island and Tseung

Kwan O. As the trough of low pressure moved away from the coastal areas, the showers over Hong Kong gradually eased off on the next two days. There were sunny intervals on May 24.

Heavy showers and squally thunderstorms returned to the territory on May 25 and 26 when another trough of low pressure moved across the south China coastal areas. More than 40 millimetres of rainfall were recorded over most parts of the territory on these two days. The showery activities in Hong Kong became less active with sunny intervals on the next three days. Affected by an active southwest monsoon, local weather deteriorated again with heavy showers and thunderstorms on May 30. More than 100 millimetres of rainfall were recorded over most parts of the territory and the rainfall even exceeded 150 millimetres over Wong Tai Sin and Tseung Kwan O on that day. Apart from isolated thunderstorms in the morning, the shower activities receded with sunny intervals on the last day of the month.

One tropical cyclone occurred over the South China Sea and the western North Pacific in May 2020.

Details of the issuance and cancellation of various warnings/signals in May are summarised in Table 1. Monthly meteorological figures and departures from normal for May are tabulated in Table 2.

[Effective Exchange Rate Index](#)

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, June 2, 2020 is 108.6 (up 0.1 against yesterday's index).

[Land Registry releases statistics for May](#)

The Land Registry today (June 2) released its statistics for May 2020.

Land registration

* The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in May was 6,885 (+41.5 per cent compared with April 2020 but -33.5 per cent compared with May 2019)

* The 12-month moving average for May was 5,168 (5.3 per cent below the 12-month moving average for April 2020 and 21.4 per cent below that for May 2019)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in May was \$60.2 billion (+57.1 per cent compared with April 2020 but -33.3 per cent compared with May 2019)

* Among the sale and purchase agreements, 5,984 were for residential units (+45.9 per cent compared with April 2020 but -27.1 per cent compared with May 2019)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$52.7 billion (+56.4 per cent compared with April 2020 but -32.8 per cent compared with May 2019)

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 May was 447,639 (+19.1 per cent compared with April 2020 but -10.0 per cent compared with May 2019)

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 (June 1).

During operation "Breakthrough" conducted on May 29, Immigration

Department (ImmD) investigators raided a restaurant in Shatin. A female Vietnamese, aged 59, was arrested while working as a dish washing worker. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was also arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

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. Meanwhile, she was also charged with one count of using a forged Hong Kong identity card and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. All sentences are to run concurrently, making a total of 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. Under the prevailing laws, it is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

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 of 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.

[Second batch of Hong Kong residents stranded in India to take special flight to return home](#)

A Government spokesman said today (June 2) that the second batch of Hong Kong residents stranded in India will take a special flight arranged by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government to return home. The flight is tentatively scheduled to depart from Mumbai for Hong Kong on June 3 in the early morning at the earliest.

This flight will assist Hong Kong residents who are now located in Mumbai and those in its surrounding areas with special needs such as people with illness, pregnant women and children, as well as family members travelling with them.

Over the past few days, the Immigration Department (ImmD) has individually contacted assistance seekers who meet the above circumstances in order to confirm their wishes to take the flight, and to obtain their personal particulars for applying for travel permission from the local government. It is initially estimated that the flight will carry about 300 people and the cost will be borne by the passengers.

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Upon arrival in Hong Kong, the returnees from India will proceed to the Department of Health's Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at AsiaWorld-Expo for compulsory COVID-19 testing. After their deep throat saliva samples are collected, the returnees will be transferred to the quarantine centre at Chun Yeung Estate, Fo Tan, for a 14-day compulsory quarantine period.

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic situation, the Indian Government has banned all international flight movements since late March. As at June 1, the ImmD had successfully contacted about 4 800 Hong Kong residents stranded in India. The first batch of about 250 Hong Kong residents stranded there returned to Hong Kong on May 18 on a chartered flight arranged by the HKSAR Government departing from New Delhi.

After receiving requests for assistance, the Security Bureau and the ImmD have been liaising with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of India to

understand the local situation and take follow-up action, and to provide relevant information as well as appropriate suggestions and practicable assistance to the assistance seekers. The HKSAR Government has also been in close liaison with the Consulate General of India in Hong Kong, and worked with a local airline for arranging flights to take the stranded Hong Kong residents home.

Currently, there are still many Hong Kong residents stranded in different areas of India. Considering the traffic restrictions still in place across India, and having regard to the quarantine arrangement for the returnees and the capacities of relevant facilities, the HKSAR Government will assist them in returning to Hong Kong in an orderly manner in batches subject to the circumstances. The Government will continue to liaise with them closely.