

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, July 19, 2018 is 103.7 (up 0.3 against yesterday's index).

SDEV speaks to the media

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, at a media session after attending "M21 TV Programme at Book Fair" today (July 19):

Reporter: Do you think this is the failure of the Government's supervision because this is not the first case of lead in water?

Secretary for Development: I think at this moment we need to find out the fact first. And also, I understand that the residents are concerned about the quality of water. We understand their concern. So, the Water Supplies Department is making arrangement to provide in-situ water support and we think that will be available this afternoon. So, that's one thing we would do. At the moment, I don't think it is right for me to make any speculation as it is premature for the Government to speculate the reason of the incident. At the moment, we would focus our efforts on finding out the facts. Depending on the outcome, we would do our best to make sure that the water quality is satisfactory.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Fifteen building plans approved in May

The Buildings Department approved 15 building plans in May, with five on Hong Kong Island, six in Kowloon and four in the New Territories.

Of the approved plans, eight were for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, three were for commercial developments, two were for factory and industrial developments and two were for community services developments.

In the same month, consent was given for works to start on 11 building projects which, when completed, will provide 30 903 square metres of gross floor area for domestic use involving 270 units, and 25 321 sq m of gross floor area for non-domestic use. The department has received notification of

commencement of works for eight building projects.

The department also issued 16 occupation permits, with six on Hong Kong Island, two in Kowloon and eight in the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation, the gross floor area for domestic use was 185 471 sq m involving 2 717 units, and 52 155 sq m was for non-domestic use.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in May totalled about \$9.4 billion.

In addition, seven demolition consents involving seven building structures were issued.

The department received 3 097 reports about unauthorised building works in May and issued 1 407 removal orders on unauthorised items.

The full version of the Monthly Digest for May can be viewed by the public on the Buildings Department's homepage (www.bd.gov.hk).

Big Wave Bay Beach reopened

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (July 19) that the shark prevention net at Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island, has been repaired and the beach has been reopened.

The beach was temporarily closed earlier on for shark prevention net maintenance work.

However, due to big waves, the red flag is still hoisted at the beach. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

Labour Department highly concerned

about fatal work accident that happened today

The Labour Department (LD) is highly concerned about the work accident that happened at a construction site in Tsim Sha Tsui this morning (July 19), in which a male worker carrying out work on a scaffold inside a lift shaft died after falling from height. The LD is saddened by the death of the worker in the accident and expresses its deepest sympathy to the victim's family.

The LD's spokesman said, "We commenced immediate on-site investigation as soon as we were notified of the accident and will issue suspension notices to the contractors involved to suspend any work inside lift shafts of the site. The contractors cannot resume the work until the LD is satisfied that measures to abate the relevant risk have been taken."

The spokesman added, "We will complete investigation as soon as possible to identify the cause of the accident, ascertain the liability of the duty holders and recommend improvement measures. We will take actions pursuant to the law if there is any violation of the work safety legislation."

The general duty provisions of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance require employers to provide safe working environments, safe plant and safe systems of work for their employees. Those who contravene the above provisions are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for six months.

In regard to today's accident, the LD will issue a Work Safety Alert through its website and email, giving a brief account of the accident concerned to duty holders, workers' unions, professional bodies of safety practitioners and others, and reminding the industry of the importance of following safety precautionary measures to prevent recurrence of similar accidents.

The LD will also remind the employer concerned of the liability for employees' compensation under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, assist family members of the deceased to claim employees' compensation and closely follow up on the case. For those with financial difficulties, the LD will assist them to apply for appropriate emergency funds. Subject to the needs and wishes of family members of the deceased, the LD will also liaise with the Social Welfare Department for financial or other assistance.

For the sake of securing the safety and health of employees at work, the LD appeals to employers to provide plant and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health. Employees should co-operate with their employers, adopt all safety measures and use personal protective equipment provided properly to avoid endangering their own work safety and that of other workers.