

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, May 28, 2018 is 99.7 (down 0.1 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, May 26, 2018 is 99.8 (up 0.2 against last Friday's index).

Water works contractors convicted for illegally carrying out construction works at night

The contractor and sub-contractor of the Water Supplies Department, Yick Hing Construction Company Limited and Charmwood Development Limited, failed to comply with the requirements of the construction noise permit (CNP) twice when carrying out road works in Wan Chai. They were fined a total of \$30,000 by Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (May 28) for contravening the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO).

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) received reports from a member of the public during October and November 2017 that road works were being carried out at night at a section of Queen's Road East near Anton Street and Monmouth Path in Wan Chai, causing noise nuisance. According to the video recording provided by a member of the public, EPD staff traced the construction site concerned. The contractors used unauthorised powered mechanical equipment to pave the road during restricted hours (from 7pm to 7am on the next day), which generated excessive noise and violated the CNP requirements. The EPD immediately revoked the CNP of the construction site and prosecuted the main contractor and sub-contractor involved after evidence gathering.

An EPD spokesman said, "The department has followed up with the works supervisory staff of the Water Services Department, and requested the contractors to properly arrange its works and strictly comply with all CNP requirements." The spokesman expressed gratitude to the member of the public for providing information and testimony to assist the department in successful prosecution against the contractors.

According to the NCO, anyone who violates the CNP requirements and uses powered mechanical equipment for construction works during restricted hours commits an offence. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$200,000 may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.

Additional one-off provision and increase in accumulation limit under Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme

The Department of Health (DH) today (May 28) announced that an additional \$1,000 worth of Elderly Health Care Vouchers (EHVs) will be provided, on a one-off basis, to each eligible elderly person with effect from June 8. The accumulation limit of the vouchers will also be increased to \$5,000 on the same day as a regular measure.

Unveiled by the Financial Secretary as one of the healthcare initiatives in the 2018-19 Budget, the above enhanced measures are estimated to benefit about 1.2 million elderly people.

"In January 2018, the annual voucher amount of \$2,000 had been released to all eHealth (Subsidies) accounts of elderly people aged 65 or above. With the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2018, an additional, one-off \$1,000 worth of vouchers will be deposited to their accounts on June 8. On the same day, the accumulation limit of the vouchers will be raised from \$4,000 to \$5,000 as a regular measure," a spokesman for the DH said.

"Persons aged 65 or above in 2018 (i.e. those born in 1953 or before) who have yet to create an eHealth (Subsidies) account on June 8 would receive their entitled voucher amount, including the additional \$1,000, upon account creation, which is subject to the accumulation limit of \$5,000," the spokesman added.

Under the EHV Scheme, eligible elderly people are subsidised to use primary care services provided by the private sector. Vouchers are issued and used through an electronic platform. Elderly people do not need to pre-register, collect or carry the vouchers. Those intending to use the vouchers should show to the participating service providers their valid Hong Kong identity card or Certificate of Exemption issued by the Immigration Department, and sign a consent form confirming the voucher amount to be used after receiving healthcare services in person. For elderly people who do not have an eHealth (Subsidies) account, the service providers will create an account for them on the same occasion free of charge.

Members of the public may also visit the Scheme's website (www.hcv.gov.hk) or call the enquiry hotline (2838 2311) for information.

Eastern District Council by-election poll cards sent to electors

The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) has mailed poll cards to around 8 700 registered electors of the Kai Hiu Constituency to remind them to vote in the Eastern District Council by-election on June 10.

"Electors of the Kai Hiu Constituency can log in to the Online Voter Information Enquiry System (www.voterinfo.gov.hk) if they have not yet received their poll cards to check whether they are registered electors of the constituency and their designated polling station. They can also call the election hotline 2891 1001 for enquiries," a spokesman for the REO said today (May 28).

"Electors are advised to read carefully the address of the designated polling station on their poll cards indicating where they should cast their votes," he said.

Together with the poll cards, the REO has sent to every elector of the Kai Hiu Constituency a map showing the location of the designated polling station, a Guide on Voting Procedure, an Introduction to Candidates and a leaflet from the Independent Commission Against Corruption on clean elections.

Two polling stations will be open to electors from 7.30am to 10.30pm on the polling day. They are located at the Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong-Chai Wan Centre, Units 1-10, G/F, Sui Lok House, Siu Sai Wan Estate, Chai Wan, Hong Kong, and Siu Sai Wan Community Hall, G/F, Siu Sai Wan Complex, 15 Siu Sai Wan Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong.

If any electors of the Kai Hiu Constituency who are remanded or detained by law enforcement agencies other than the Correctional Services Department (CSD) on the polling day wish to vote in this by-election, they will be arranged to cast their votes at the dedicated polling station located at Chai Wan Police Station, 6 Lok Man Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong. The polling hours will be from 7.30am to 10.30pm.

Should there be any electors of the Kai Hiu Constituency imprisoned or remanded in the CSD's custody on the polling day, arrangements will be made for them to vote at dedicated polling stations set up at their respective penal institutions. For security reasons, polling hours for the dedicated polling stations at penal institutions will be from 9am to 4pm.

The voting procedure for electors and the venue setup at the dedicated polling stations will be basically the same as those of the ordinary polling stations.

The three candidates contesting this by-election are Tan Chun Chun Enki

(No. 1), Ishigami Lee Fung-king Alice (No. 2) and Chik Kit-ling Elaine (No. 3).

Second round of registration for Certificate of Sponsorship under HK/UK Working Holiday Scheme to commence

The Labour Department (LD) announced today (May 28) that another round of registration for the Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) under the Hong Kong/United Kingdom (UK) Working Holiday Scheme would commence on July 3. Youths holding a Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) passport and interested in participating in the UK's Youth Mobility Scheme (YMS) may submit their registrations for the CoS to the LD from July 3 to July 16 this year (both dates inclusive), before applying for a Tier 5 (YMS) visa with the UK from this year's remaining quota.

According to the arrangement agreed between Hong Kong and the UK, youths from Hong Kong can apply for a Tier 5 (YMS) visa allowing them to stay in the UK for up to two years, during which they can engage in short-term employment to finance their stay, privately-funded studies and/or voluntary work of choice. The annual quota is 1 000 for HKSAR passport holders.

Applicants for the CoS have to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- The applicant must be a holder of a valid HKSAR passport;
- The applicant must be aged between 18 and 30 on the day the visa application is made; and
- The applicant must not have previously spent time in the UK as a "Working Holidaymaker" or a YMS temporary migrant.

Applicants who wish to obtain a CoS can download the relevant registration form online (www.whs.gov.hk/res/pdf/UK_regform.pdf) and submit the completed registration form together with the required supporting documents to LD during the registration period. Registrations submitted outside the registration period will not be processed.

Holders of British National (Overseas) (BN(0)) passport do not need to apply for CoS and can submit their applications for Tier 5 (YMS) visa direct to the UK Visa Application Centre in Hong Kong.

For details on obtaining a CoS, please refer to LD's website: www.whs.gov.hk/en/partners.php?location=UK#cos. Please also visit www.whs.gov.hk for details relating to the Working Holiday Scheme.