

## **Effective Exchange Rate Index**

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 is 95.1 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

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## **Public housing applicant convicted by court for making false statement**

A spokesman for the Housing Department (HD) today (January 18) said that the HD always spares no effort in combating false declarations made during applications for public rental housing (PRH).

A PRH applicant declared her marital status as divorced in a declaration form submitted to the HD in 2019. A subsequent investigation revealed that she in fact remarried in 2013. According to the prevailing policy, the applicant's application for PRH had to be made together with her spouse. She admitted that she intentionally concealed her marital status so that she might acquire a PRH flat faster.

The applicant was prosecuted for knowingly making a false statement in respect of her application for PRH contrary to Section 26(1)(c) of the Housing Ordinance, and was convicted earlier at Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts. After considering the gravity of the offence and the probation report, the defendant was sentenced to four weeks' imprisonment (suspended for 12 months) and was fined \$5,000 by the presiding magistrate in Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts yesterday (January 17).

The spokesman reminded all PRH applicants that if any persons are convicted by the courts for making a false statement knowingly during a PRH application, contrary to Section 26(1)(c) of the Housing Ordinance, the maximum penalty is a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months. The PRH application concerned will be cancelled while any allocated PRH unit will be recovered by the HD.

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## **Housing Authority sets rents for two**

## [new estates](#)

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

Rents for 9 415 flats, tentatively scheduled for completion between March and June 2022, in nine non-standard blocks at two Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) new public rental housing (PRH) estates will be set at the best rent level in Tuen Mun District. The best rent level of a respective district is expressed in terms of dollars per square metre of internal floor area and determined with reference to the location and comparable value of the estates concerned.

The best rent at \$62.40 per sq m per month for the flats in Tuen Mun District will apply to the 4 232 flats in Wo Hei House, Wo Sin House, Wo Choi House and Wo Lai House of Wo Tin Estate; and 5 183 flats in Ching Shun House, Ching Sum House, Ching Lok House, Ching Hay House and Ching Sin House of Ching Tin Estate.

"Under this rent-fixing exercise, all the flats are set at a rent level below \$2,500 per month," a spokesman for the HA said today (January 18), adding that PRH rents, which are inclusive of rates, management fees and maintenance costs, are heavily subsidised.

"PRH applicants who are allocated new flats but cannot afford the rents may request refurbished flats at lower rents, and they may also apply for assistance under the Rent Assistance Scheme for flats in older block types where applicable," the spokesman added.

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## [Import of poultry meat and products from areas in Hautes-Pyrénées Department and Lot-et-Garonne Department in France suspended](#)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (January 18) that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Hautes-Pyrénées Department and Lot-et-Garonne Department in France, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the above-mentioned areas with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics

Department, Hong Kong imported about 40 tonnes of chilled poultry meat, about 3 920 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 240 000 poultry eggs from France in the first nine months of last year.

"The CFS has contacted the French authority over the issues and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

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## **HAD invites TWGHs and YCH to provide free emotional support hotlines for persons under quarantine in Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre**

Due to the fifth wave of COVID-19 infections in Hong Kong, a number of people who are close contacts of confirmed cases are under compulsory quarantine in Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre. As such, the Home Affairs Department invited the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) and Yan Chai Hospital (YCH) to set up free emotional support hotlines for those under quarantine. The hotlines are manned by professional social workers, with a view to supporting the affected to release their stress under quarantine through sharing and counselling. The details of the emotional support hotlines are as follows:

TWGHs CEASE Crisis Centre Hotline: 18281

(Service hours: 24-hour service from January 18 to February 14, 2022)

YCH Hotline: 5484 1081

(Service hours: 9am to 6pm from Monday to Friday (except public holidays) from January 18 to February 14, 2022)

Those under compulsory quarantine are being informed of the above service through the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health.