

Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures Released

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (May 7) that the official foreign currency reserve assets of Hong Kong amounted to US\$490.6 billion as at the end of April 2021 (end-March 2021: US\$491.4 billion) (Annex).

There were no unsettled foreign exchange contracts at end-April 2021 (end-March 2021: US\$0.5 billion).

The total foreign currency reserve assets of US\$490.6 billion represent about seven times the currency in circulation or 47 per cent of Hong Kong dollar M3.

At present, four press releases relating to the Exchange Fund's data are issued by the HKMA each month. Three of these releases are issued to disseminate monetary data in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The fourth press release, on the Exchange Fund's Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account, is made in accordance with the HKMA's policy of maintaining a high level of transparency. For the month of May 2021, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

May 7	SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
May 14	SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund)
May 31	SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity
May 31	Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account

Thirteen persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations (with photo)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a series of territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations codenamed "Twilight" from May 3 to yesterday (May 6). Nine suspected illegal workers and three suspected employers were arrested. One suspected aider and abettor was also arrested.

During the "Twilight" operations, ImmD Task Force officers raided 45 target locations including a bar, a car park, factories, manicure shops, a massage parlour, premises under renovation, a recycling shop, residential buildings, restaurants, retail shops and warehouses. Nine suspected illegal workers and three suspected employers were arrested. The suspected illegal workers comprised four men and five women, aged 21 to 50. Among them, a woman was a holder of a recognisance form, which prohibits her from taking any employment. Meanwhile, one man and two women, aged 42 to 53, were suspected of employing the illegal workers. Also, a woman, aged 47, suspected of aiding and abetting a person who breached her condition of stay in Hong Kong, was also arrested.

"Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties," an ImmD spokesman said.

The 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.

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 an 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.



[Service arrangements of DH's Student Health Service](#)

The Department of Health (DH) today (May 7) announced that the Student Health Service (StdHS) will resume some of its annual health assessments starting from May 10. The StdHS's annual health assessments for Primary One and Secondary One students in the school year 2020/21 will be gradually resumed at seven of its Student Health Service Centres (SHSCs).

The seven SHSCs are Chai Wan SHSC, Kowloon City Lions Clubs SHSC, Lam Tin SHSC, Sha Tin SHSC, South Kwai Chung SHSC, Tuen Mun SHSC and Western SHSC. Parents will be notified of the arrangements of the health assessments via their schools.

In addition, limited Special Assessment Centre (SAC) services will continue to be provided to students who require further follow-ups at SACs.

These include assessment services provided by clinical psychologists, dietitians, optometrists, audiologists and scoliosis related services.

For enquiries, please contact the centres concerned during service hours, which are Monday to Friday, 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 6pm (except public holidays). Details of the centres are available at www.studenthealth.gov.hk/english/centre/centre.html.

Meanwhile, the DH will continue to implement stringent infection control measures at service units, of which, all clients with appointments and visitors must put on surgical masks and have their body temperature checked.

Approved Lau Fau Shan and Tsim Bei Tsui Outline Zoning Plan amended

The Town Planning Board today (May 7) announced amendments to the approved Lau Fau Shan and Tsim Bei Tsui Outline Zoning Plan (OZP).

The amendments mainly involve the rezoning of a site at the junction of Tin Wah Road and Man Tak Road from "Residential (Group C)" and "Green Belt" to "Residential (Group A)" for public housing development. Opportunity is also taken to amend the Notes and Explanatory Statement of the OZP to reflect the above amendments and to update the general information of various land use zonings and the planning area, where appropriate.

The draft Lau Fau Shan and Tsim Bei Tsui OZP No. S/YL-LFS/10 incorporating the amendments is now available for public inspection during office hours at (i) the Secretariat of the Board, (ii) the Planning Enquiry Counters, (iii) the Tuen Mun and Yuen Long West District Planning Office, (iv) the Yuen Long District Office, (v) the Ping Shan Rural Committee and (vi) the Ha Tsuen Rural Committee.

Any person may make written representation in respect of the amendments to the Secretary of the Board on or before July 7. Any person who intends to make a representation is advised to read the revised Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 29B on "Submission and Publication of Representations, Comments on Representations and Further Representations under the Town Planning Ordinance" (TPB PG-No. 29B).

Submission of a representation should comply with the requirements set out in TPB PG-No. 29B. In particular, the representer should take note of the following:

* If the representer fails to provide his or her full name and the first four alphanumeric characters of his or her Hong Kong identity card or passport number as required under TPB PG-No. 29B, the representation submitted shall

be treated as not having been made; and

* The Secretariat of the Board reserves the right to require the representer to provide identity proof for verification.

The Guidelines and the submission form are available at locations (i) and (ii) above and the Board's website (www.info.gov.hk/tpb).

Copies of the draft Lau Fau Shan and Tsim Bei Tsui OZP are available for sale at the Map Publications Centres in North Point and Yau Ma Tei. The electronic version of the OZP can be viewed at the Board's website (www.info.gov.hk/tpb).

Approved Tin Shui Wai Outline Zoning Plan amended

The Town Planning Board today (May 7) announced amendments to the approved Tin Shui Wai Outline Zoning Plan (OZP).

The amendments mainly involve the rezoning of a site at the junction of Tin Wah Road and Tin Ying Road from "Government, Institution or Community" and an area shown as "Road" to "Residential (Group A)1" for public housing development, and rezoning of a site at the junction of Tin Wing Road and Tin Yan Road from "Undetermined" to "Residential (Group B)2". Opportunity is also taken to amend the Notes and Explanatory Statement of the OZP to reflect the above amendments and to update the general information of various land use zonings and the planning area, where appropriate.

The draft Tin Shui Wai OZP No. S/TSW/15 incorporating the amendments is now available for public inspection during office hours at (i) the Secretariat of the Board, (ii) the Planning Enquiry Counters, (iii) the Tuen Mun and Yuen Long West District Planning Office, (iv) the Yuen Long District Office, (v) the Ping Shan Rural Committee and (vi) the Ha Tsuen Rural Committee.

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