

Appointment of non-permanent judge from another common law jurisdiction of the Court of Final Appeal

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Chief Executive has, on the recommendation of the Judicial Officers Recommendation Commission and with the endorsement of the Legislative Council, made the following appointment:

Non-permanent judge from another common law jurisdiction of the Court of Final Appeal

(for a term of three years commencing May 24, 2024)
The Honourable James Leslie Bain Allsop

Company and its two responsible officers fined \$92,500 for contravening Employment Ordinance

Rayland International Cooperation Limited and its two responsible officers, a director and a manager, were prosecuted by the Labour Department (LD) for violation of the requirements under the Employment Ordinance (EO). The company and its two responsible officers pleaded guilty at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (May 23) and were fined a total sum of \$92,500.

The company wilfully and without reasonable excuse contravened the requirement of the EO, failing to pay four employees' wages within seven days after the expiry of the wage periods and the termination of employment contracts, totalling about \$645,000. The two responsible officers concerned were prosecuted and convicted for their consent, connivance or neglect in part of the above offences.

"The ruling helps disseminate a strong message to all employers, directors, managers and responsible officers of companies that they have to pay wages to employees within the statutory time limit stipulated in the EO," a spokesman for LD said.

â€œThe LD will not tolerate these offences and will spare no effort in enforcing the law and safeguarding employees' statutory rights," the

spokesman added.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, May 23, 2024 is 106.2 (up 0.1 against yesterday's index).

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on May 22 to noon today (May 23), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 97 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" (www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All

the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 53 398 samples of food imported from Japan (including 34 512 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 13 536 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

EPD convictions in April

Sixty-two convictions were recorded in April 2024 for breaches of legislation enforced by the Environmental Protection Department.

Seven of the convictions were under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance, five were under the Noise Control Ordinance, 13 were under the Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation, 32 were under the Waste Disposal Ordinance, and five were under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance.

A company was fined \$35,000, which was the heaviest fine in April, for failing to comply with an air pollution abatement notice.