

CHP investigates outbreak of acute gastroenteritis at primary school in Kowloon Tong

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 16) investigating an outbreak of acute gastroenteritis (AGE) at a primary school in Kowloon Tong, and hence reminded the public and management of institutions to maintain personal and environmental hygiene against AGE.

The outbreak involves 11 boys and 10 girls aged 7, who have developed diarrhoea and vomiting since May 15. Among them, 10 sought medical attention and one required hospitalisation. All patients have been in a stable condition.

Officers of the CHP conducted a site visit and provided health advice to the staff of the school concerning proper and thorough disinfection, proper disposal of vomitus, and personal and environmental hygiene. The school has been put under medical surveillance.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP advised members of the public to take heed of the following preventive measures against gastroenteritis:

- Ensure proper personal hygiene;
- Wash hands thoroughly before handling food and eating, after using the toilet or after changing diapers;
- Wear gloves when disposing of vomitus or faecal matter, and wash hands afterwards;
- Clean and disinfect contaminated areas or items promptly and thoroughly with diluted household bleach (by adding one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite to 49 parts of water). Wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Pay attention to food hygiene;
- Use separate utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Avoid food that is not thoroughly cooked;
- Drink boiled water; and
- Do not patronise unlicensed food premises or food stalls.

The public may visit the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk) or call the Health Education Hotline (2833 0111) for more information.

LegCo committee meetings

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Bills Committee on National Anthem Bill will hold a meeting tomorrow (May 17) at 8.45am in Conference Room 1 of the LegCo Complex. During the meeting, members of the Bills Committee will meet with the Government. Meanwhile, the meeting of the Bills Committee originally scheduled for Saturday (May 18) at 2pm has been rescheduled to be held at 9am on the same day in Conference Room 1 of the LegCo Complex.

In addition, the meeting of the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) originally scheduled at 3pm tomorrow in Conference Room 1 of the LegCo Complex will start at 4.30pm (or an earlier time between 4.15pm and 4.30pm). If the preceding House Committee meeting ends before 4.15pm, the FC meeting will start at 4.15pm.

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected unsafe whitening cream (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs today (May 16) seized a total of 429 boxes of suspected unsafe whitening cream from a retailer cum importer in Tsim Sha Tsui and its warehouse in Yuen Long.

Customs earlier conducted a test-buy operation on the whitening cream from a local market for safety testing and found that the mercury content of the whitening cream samples exceeded the permissible limit specified in the relevant safety standard.

Customs officers conducted the operation today and seized the batch of whitening creams from the retailer cum importer in Tsim Sha Tsui and its warehouse in Yuen Long. Prohibition notice was also served on the retailer cum importer, prohibiting the continued sale of the relevant whitening creams.

Under the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance (CGSO), it is an offence to supply, manufacture or import into Hong Kong consumer goods unless the goods comply with the general safety requirements for consumer goods. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year on first conviction, and \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years on subsequent conviction.

Customs will continue conducting spot checks with a view to protecting consumers' safety.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the CGSO and members of the public not to buy or use whitening cream of unknown composition or obtained from doubtful sources.

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Members of the public with information relating to unsafe consumer goods may make a report via Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade in March 2019](#)

Further to the external merchandise trade statistics in value terms for March 2019 released earlier on, the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (May 16) the volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for that month.

In March 2019, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods decreased by 3.0% over March 2018. Concurrently, the volume of imports of goods decreased by 2.0%.

For the first quarter of 2019 as a whole, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods decreased by 4.2% over the same period in 2018. Concurrently, the volume of imports of goods decreased by 5.0%.

Comparing the first quarter of 2019 with the fourth quarter of 2018 on a seasonally adjusted basis, the volume of total exports of goods decreased by 2.8%. Concurrently, the volume of imports of goods decreased by 2.9%.

Changes in volume of external merchandise trade are derived from changes in external merchandise trade value with the effect of price changes discounted.

Comparing March 2019 with March 2018, the prices of total exports of goods increased by 2.3%. Concurrently, the prices of imports of goods also increased by 2.3%.

As regards price changes in the first quarter of 2019 over the same period in 2018, the prices of total exports of goods increased by 2.2%. Concurrently, the prices of imports of goods also increased by 2.2%.

Price changes in external merchandise trade are reflected by changes in unit value indices of external merchandise trade, which are compiled based on average unit values or, for certain commodities, specific price data.

The terms of trade index is derived from the ratio of price index of total exports of goods to that of imports of goods. Compared with the same periods in 2018, the index increased by 0.1% in March 2019, whereas it remained virtually unchanged in the first quarter of 2019.

Changes in the unit value and volume of total exports of goods by main destination are shown in Table 1.

Comparing March 2019 with March 2018, double-digit declines were recorded for the total export volume to the mainland of China (the Mainland) (-12.5%) and India (-12.0%). Concurrently, the total export volume to the USA decreased by 1.3%. On the other hand, the total export volume to Japan and Taiwan increased by 1.7% and 14.2% respectively.

Over the same period of comparison, the total export prices to all main destinations increased: Japan (+3.0%), the Mainland (+2.8%), the USA (+2.4%), India (+1.5%) and Taiwan (+1.0%).

Changes in the unit value and volume of imports of goods by main supplier are shown in Table 2.

Comparing March 2019 with March 2018, double-digit declines were recorded for the import volume from Taiwan (-27.4%) and Singapore (-13.5%). Concurrently, the import volume from Japan decreased by 3.4%. On the other hand, the import volume from the Mainland and the USA increased by 5.1% and 10.6% respectively.

Over the same period of comparison, the import prices from all main suppliers increased: Singapore (+4.9%), Japan (+3.0%), the Mainland (+2.6%), Taiwan (+2.2%) and the USA (+0.9%).

Further information

Details of the above statistics are published in the March 2019 issue of "Hong Kong Merchandise Trade Index Numbers". Users can download the publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp230.jsp?productCode=B1020006).

Enquiries on merchandise trade indices may be directed to the Trade

Temporary suspension of self-service library station services

The self-service library station located at Hong Kong Cultural Centre in Tsim Sha Tsui will suspend services from 10am to 1pm on May 20 (Monday) and the station located at Island East Sports Centre Sitting-out Area will suspend services from 2pm to 6pm on the same day for regular maintenance, a spokesman for the Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (May 16).

During the service suspension period, readers are welcome to use other public libraries to borrow or return library materials. They may also renew library materials by telephoning 2698 0002 or 2827 2833 or via www.hkpl.gov.hk.