

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, July 13, 2018 is 102.9 (same as yesterday's index).

Update on number of dengue fever cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 13) reported the latest number of cases of dengue fever (DF), and again urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From July 6 to 12, the CHP recorded three confirmed DF cases. The patients had been to Thailand (two cases) and the Philippines (one case) during the incubation period.

As of yesterday (July 12), 47 cases had been confirmed this year, all of which were imported cases. The cases were mainly imported from Thailand (21), the Philippines (nine) and Cambodia (six).

DF remains endemic in some areas in Asia and overseas. The latest figures for 2018 reveal that 28 732 cases have been recorded in Thailand, 1 467 in Singapore (since December 31, 2017) and 62 in Japan. Two local cases have been recorded to date in Taiwan in 2018. In the Americas, the latest figures indicate that 161 154 and 15 131 cases have been filed in Brazil and Mexico respectively in 2018.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

To reduce the risk of infections spread by mosquitoes, apart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from affected areas should apply insect repellent for 14 days (DF) or at least 21 days (Zika virus infection) upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor. DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public may refer to the CHP's [tips for using insect repellents](#) for details.

CFS announces results of targeted surveillance on *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat food

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 13) announced the results of a recently completed targeted food surveillance project on *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat food, which showed that all samples passed the test.

The CFS collected a total of 500 samples of ready-to-eat food from different retail outlets, including online retailers, and food factories for testing of *Listeria monocytogenes* this year. The samples included various types of high-risk food, such as cheese, frozen confections, cold cuts, fruit, salad, sashimi, smoked salmon and other smoked seafood.

"*Listeria monocytogenes* can be killed under normal cooking temperature. However, unlike other food poisoning bacteria, it can grow slowly at refrigerated temperature as low as 0 degrees Celsius. Therefore, refrigerated

ready-to-eat food with a long shelf life (over five days) is a potential high-risk item for listeriosis," a spokesman for the CFS said.

Listeriosis is usually caused by eating food contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*. Most healthy individuals do not develop symptoms or only have mild symptoms like fever, muscle pain, headache, nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea when infected. However, severe complications such as septicemia, meningitis or even death may occur in newborns, the elderly and those with a weaker immune system. Although infected pregnant women may just experience mild symptoms generally, the infection of *Listeria monocytogenes* may cause miscarriage, infant death, preterm birth, or severe infection in newborns.

The spokesman reminded the public to maintain good personal and food hygiene to ensure food safety. To reduce the risk of listeriosis, those belonging to the high-risk groups, i.e. pregnant women, infants, the elderly, chronic disease patients and those with a weaker immune system, should avoid eating high-risk food, including refrigerated ready-to-eat food with a long shelf life (over five days) (such as smoked salmon, smoked ham and cooked deli meats), cheese made with unpasteurised milk (including soft and semi-soft cheese), and pre-made or prepackaged salads.

The CFS will continue to promote food safety education to the public and other stakeholders through various channels to strengthen public knowledge on food safety. The Centre will also enhance communication with the food trade to raise food safety standards.

[Country and Marine Parks Board to meet next Friday](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Country and Marine Parks Board:

The Country and Marine Parks Board will meet next Friday (July 20) and members of the public are welcome to attend as observers. Major items for discussion include:

- * Public Engagement Exercise of the Task Force on Land Supply; and
- * Consultancy Study on Enhancement of the Recreation and Education Potential of Country Parks and Special Areas – Conceptual Proposals.

The meeting will be held in Room 701, 7/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon, at 2.30pm.

Members of the public interested in observing the meeting should contact the board secretary at 2150 6697 for seat reservation. Attendance will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

FEHD orders light refreshment restaurant in Quarry Bay to suspend business for 14 days

The Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene has ordered a light refreshment restaurant in Quarry Bay to suspend business for 14 days as the operator repeatedly breached the Food Business Regulation (FBR) by extending the business area illegally.

The restaurant, Shun Nam Kitchen, located at shop 17 on the ground floor of Tak Lee Building, 993 King's Road, Quarry Bay, was ordered to suspend business from today (July 13) to July 26.

"In March and May this year, two convictions for the above-mentioned breach were recorded against the licensee of the restaurant. A total fine of \$7,200 was levied by the court and 30 demerit points were registered against the licensee under the department's demerit points system. The contraventions resulted in the 14-day business suspension," a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said.

The licensee of the restaurant had a record of two convictions for the same offence in September and November last year. A total fine of \$4,500 was levied and 30 demerit points were registered. The breaches led to business suspension for seven days in December last year.

The spokesman reminded licensees of food premises to comply with the FBR or their licences could be suspended or cancelled.

Licensed food premises are required to exhibit a sign, at a conspicuous place near the main entrance, indicating that the premises are licensed. A list of licensed food premises is available on the FEHD's website (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/index.html).