

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 is 106.4 (down 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 March 10 to noon today (March 11), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 222 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, 2023, to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 121 543 samples of food imported from Japan (including 79 790 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 28 078 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Booming panda economy: strengthening Sichuan-Hong Kong collaboration – Director-General of InvestHK visits Sichuan to promote global supply chain opportunities and leveraging Hong Kong as gateway to international markets (with photos)

The Director-General of Investment Promotion at Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK), Ms Alpha Lau, has embarked on her first official visit to Chengdu, Sichuan Province, from March 10 to 12. During the visit, she promoted Hong Kong's new business opportunities to local government authorities, enterprises, and media, and the complementary advantages between Sichuan and Hong Kong in industrial and innovation chains for upgraded development.

The third session of the 14th NPC and the third session of the 14th Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee have provided clear direction on how Hong Kong can continue to leverage its unique advantages and drive ongoing reform and innovation. Hong Kong can play a greater role in three key areas: deepening international collaboration, further enhancing integration within the Greater Bay Area, and fully embracing technological innovation as a key driver of high-quality economic development.

Ms Lau met with Deputy Director General of the Sichuan Provincial Department of Commerce Mr Liang Yong. They exchanged insights on topics including multinational supply chain management. She stated that 2025 marks the final year of the 14th Five-Year Plan and a critical period for deepening

reforms. Ms Lau expressed hope that through this visit and promotion, Sichuan businesses could gain a deeper understanding of Hong Kong's unique advantages under the "one country, two systems" framework. Coupled with its status as an international financial centre and its world-class professional services, Hong Kong serves as a strategic gateway for Mainland enterprises to expand into global markets, as well as an ideal entry point for overseas businesses looking to enter the Mainland market.

Ms Lau attended and delivered welcome remarks at a seminar today (March 11) entitled "Sichuan Enterprises Going Global: Leveraging Hong Kong's Advantages for International Supply Chain Collaboration", which was jointly organised by InvestHK, the Sichuan Provincial Department of Commerce, and the Commercial Office of the Economic Affairs Department of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government (LOCPG) in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The event was also supported and co-organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Chengdu (CDETO), the Sichuan Federation of Industry and Commerce, and the Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce in Sichuan. Mr Liang and Second-level Inspector from the Commercial Office of the Economic Affairs Department of the LOCPG in the HKSAR Mr Yan Yongqing gave remarks. The Director of the CDETO, Mr Enoch Yuen, was also in attendance.

Ms Lau said, "Hong Kong has always served as a bridge connecting Sichuan with global markets. Sichuan and Hong Kong complement each other in industrial resources. Hong Kong is not only the largest source of foreign investment in Sichuan Province but also a primary destination for Sichuan enterprises' outbound investments. Recently, driven by the booming 'panda economy' and the popularity of the film 'Ne Zha', Sichuan and Hong Kong have maintained close ties in tourism, culinary consumption, and cultural entertainment. Especially as Sichuan is developing into an innovation-driven economy, it could capitalise on Hong Kong's emphasis on the innovation and technology sector and the vigorous advancement of new quality productive forces. It is believed that Hong Kong's diverse new business opportunities can effectively empower Sichuan enterprises in their internationalisation and help them expand globally through Hong Kong." She also took the opportunity to meet with local media and elaborate on business advantages of Hong Kong.â€

Mr Yan said, "The Central Government fully supports Hong Kong in seizing the historical opportunities brought by national development, proactively aligning with national strategies such as the 14th Five-Year Plan, the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative. By integrating and deeply connecting the industrial, information, supply, and service chains of Sichuan and Hong Kong, there is great potential for collaboration in building competitive industrial clusters and developing an innovation-driven economy. As the representative office of the Ministry of Commerce in Hong Kong, responsible for economic and trade co-operation between the two regions, the Commercial Office of the Economic Affairs Department of the LOCPG in the HKSAR is committed to providing support and services for all Mainland enterprises to invest in Hong Kong and expand to overseas markets

via the city."

Mr Liang, who is representing the provincial government authority, expressed that they will actively promote and continuously deepen the "dual-circle interaction" and "two-way empowerment" between Sichuan and Hong Kong, as well as between the western region and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. By strengthening complementary advantages and fully leveraging Hong Kong's role as a "super-connector", it is aimed to help enterprises expand overseas and establish a global presence, driving greater value creation.

The Head of Transport & Logistics and Industrials at InvestHK, Mr Benjamin Wong, delivered a keynote presentation on Hong Kong's business advantages, encouraging Sichuan enterprises to establish their global supply chain management centres in Hong Kong. He also introduced the services that InvestHK provides to assist Mainland enterprises.

The Managing Director of Li & Fung Development (China) Ltd, Mr Chang Kamun, shared his experiences as a leading enterprise in multinational supply chain management on the topic of how Hong Kong serves as a hub for multinational management centre and trade financing for Mainland enterprises to guests at the event.

To provide detailed explanations to Sichuan enterprises about Hong Kong's professional service advantages and the talent schemes offered by the HKSAR Government, the event invited Regional Leader of Central and Western China, Global Trade Solutions for HSBC Bank (China), Ms Renee Wong; Partner, Tax of KPMG Advisory (China), Mr Aaron Li; and Chief Immigration Officer from the CDET0, Mr Vincent Yee, to share their insights with guests.

In the last part of the seminar, the Head of Business and Talent Attraction/Investment Promotion of the CDET0, Mr Gan Shanli, hosted a panel discussion that focused on how Sichuan enterprises can fully utilise Hong Kong's platform to grab new business opportunities. This seminar attracted around 150 representatives from local enterprises, institutions, and media in Sichuan Province.

During the three-day visit, Ms Lau will visit a number of leading enterprises from high-tech sectors, such as green energy, advanced manufacturing, and low-altitude economy, to understand and explore their plans in establishing or expanding operations in Hong Kong.



Results of Pharmacist Registration Examinations December 2024 announced

The following is issued on behalf of the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong:

The Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong announced today (March 11) the results of the Pharmacist Registration Examinations held in December 2024.

There were 46, 74 and 48 candidates sitting for examinations in pharmacy

legislation in Hong Kong, pharmacy practice and pharmacology respectively, with corresponding passing rates of 30.43 per cent, 6.76 per cent and 29.17 per cent.

Apart from meeting other requirements prescribed by the Board, any pharmacy graduate outside Hong Kong intending to be registered as a pharmacist in Hong Kong is required to pass the above three subjects.

The Board conducts its Registration Examinations twice a year, normally in June and December.

Chronic Disease Co-Care Pilot Scheme to be expanded to provide preventive screening services in General Out-patient Clinics for underprivileged group

The Health Bureau announced today (March 11) that the Primary Healthcare Commission will expand the Chronic Disease Co-Care Pilot Scheme (CDCC Pilot Scheme) to designated General Out-patient Clinics (GOPCs) under the Hospital Authority (HA) in phases, starting from March 28, to provide preventive screening and care services for the underprivileged group. The first phase will be piloted in seven GOPCs (see Annex 1), with plans to add six other GOPCs (see Annex 2) by the end of June to expand the coverage of prevention-oriented primary healthcare services.

The Government launched the CDCC Pilot Scheme in 2023 to subsidise Hong Kong residents aged 45 or above with no known medical history of diabetes mellitus (DM) or hypertension (HT) to undergo DM and HT screening, as well as receive consultation services on a co-payment basis in the private healthcare sector through pairing with a family doctor of their choice, with a view to encouraging citizens to gain a better understanding of their own health status as early as possible, thereby achieving the goal of "early prevention, early identification and early treatment". In the meantime, in light of the announcement of repositioning the HA's GOPCs as comprehensive primary healthcare service providers for the underprivileged in "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address", the Government has decided to provide CDCC Pilot Scheme services for underprivileged persons aged 45 or above with no known medical history of specific chronic diseases at GOPCs on a pilot basis, enabling them to achieve early detection and management of chronic diseases, thereby enhancing the overall health of the general public.

Starting from March 28, recipients of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme, recipients of the Old Age Living Allowance aged 75 or above, or persons holding a valid medical fee waiver certificate (hereafter referred to as eligible persons) interested in joining the Pilot Scheme can first visit the District Health Centres (DHCs) or DHC Expresses for an initial assessment. DHCs/DHC Expresses will arrange for participants to receive preventive screening services at designated HA GOPCs, with the same service scope as the CDCC Pilot Scheme. Relevant GOPCs will contact the participants and arrange appointments for them within one month upon receiving referrals from the DHCs/DHC Expresses. Relevant GOPCs will also arrange laboratory tests based on the participant's health risk, formulate a health management plan based on the test results, and provide health education and counselling services. The fees for using the preventive care services for eligible persons will be fully or partially waived according to their eligibility within one year from the date of receiving their first service. Participants' eligibility will be verified again after the one-year service period.

The Government will continue to review the effectiveness of the pilot services, which are planned to be gradually expanded to designated GOPC service points across all 18 districts by the fourth quarter of this year. In addition, the CDCC Pilot Scheme will be expanded later to include blood lipid testing, which will also be provided to the underprivileged group in GOPCs. The Government will continue to promote the CDCC Pilot Scheme and provide the latest information about the Scheme to enhance awareness of self-health management and promote active prevention and management of chronic diseases among various sectors of the community.