

## Red tide sighted

A red tide was sighted during the past week, the Inter-departmental Red Tide Working Group reported today (February 14).

On February 13, staff of the Marine Department spotted a red tide at Tolo Harbour. The red tide still persists and no associated fish deaths have been reported as of today.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The red tide was formed by *Asterionellopsis glacialis*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters and non-toxic."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at Yim Tin Tsai, Yim Tin Tsai (East), Yung Shue Au and Lo Fu Wat fish culture zones to monitor the situation closely and increase aeration where necessary.

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The AFCD's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue to monitor red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.

---

## Result of tenders of People's Bank of China RMB Bills held on February 14, 2025

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

Result of the tenders of the People's Bank of China RMB Bills held on February 14, 2025:

### Tender Result

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Tender Date	: February 14, 2025
Bills available for Tender	: Three-Month RMB Bills
Issuer	: The People's Bank of China
Issue Number	: BCHKFP25003
Issue Date	: February 18, 2025
Maturity Date	: May 20, 2025 (or the closest coupon payment date)

Application Amount : RMB 135,611 million  
Issue Amount : RMB 40,000 million  
Average accepted Coupon Rate : 2.41 per cent  
Highest accepted Coupon Rate : 2.60 per cent  
(Bills' Coupon)  
Lowest accepted Coupon Rate : 2.00 per cent  
Allocation Ratio (At Highest : Approximately 13.97 per cent  
accepted Coupon Rate)

#### Tender Result

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Tender Date : February 14, 2025  
Bills available for Tender : One-Year RMB Bills  
Issuer : The People's Bank of China  
Issue Number : BCHKFP25004  
Issue Date : February 18, 2025  
Maturity Date : February 18, 2026 (or the  
closest coupon payment date)  
Application Amount : RMB 65,608 million  
Issue Amount : RMB 20,000 million  
Average accepted Coupon Rate : 2.12 per cent  
Highest accepted Coupon Rate : 2.32 per cent  
(Bills' Coupon)  
Lowest accepted Coupon Rate : 1.90 per cent  
Allocation Ratio (At Highest : Approximately 65.00 per cent  
accepted Coupon Rate)

---

## [HKETO Jakarta celebrates Year of Snake in Manila \(with photos\)](#)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Jakarta (HKETO Jakarta) hosted a business seminar and luncheon entitled Building a Stronger Future: The Synergistic Power of Fintech and Logistics in Manila, the Philippines, today (February 14) to celebrate the Year of the Snake. Some 200 guests from the local government, business, academic, cultural and media sectors attended the event.

In her welcome speech, the Director-General of the HKETO Jakarta, Miss Libera Cheng, noted that commercial and people-to-people ties between Hong Kong and the Philippines have continued to develop. Bilateral trade in goods

amounted to US\$13.9 billion last year, and Hong Kong was the fifth-largest trading partner and third-largest export market of the Philippines.

"The Philippines is Hong Kong's largest source of tourist arrivals from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). We welcomed close to 1.2 million Filipino visitors last year, far exceeding pre-pandemic levels. Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) is connected to five major cities in the Philippines, not only enabling tourists to visit Hong Kong with ease, but also serving as an important international gateway to the Philippines. As we press ahead with the Skytopia airport city plan, HKIA will become a new world-leading commercial and logistics landmark."

Miss Cheng added that fintech and logistics are the economic pillars of the future. Their synergistic power has driven the rapid growth of e-commerce and other sectors. In this regard, the Chief Executive introduced in his 2024 Policy Address a series of relevant measures, including expanding the geographical coverage of "E-commerce Easy" under the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales to ASEAN countries, and holding the Hong Kong Shopping Festival in the ASEAN market in due course to help small and medium-sized enterprises tap into the local e-commerce sales market.

"We also welcome Philippine enterprises to make use of various business-friendly measures, such as the reduction in the duty rate for liquor last year and the world-class gold storage facilities at HKIA, to fully leverage Hong Kong's role as an international financial and trade centre."

The Acting Deputy Director (Commercial Relations) of the HKETO Jakarta, Ms Ida Ho, moderated the subsequent panel discussion to explore with local industry leaders the latest developments of the relevant sectors and explore opportunities for co-operation between the two places.

Dignitaries attending the dinner included the Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines, Mr Huang Xilian; the Undersecretary of the Department of Trade and Industry of the Philippines, Ms Mary Jean Pacheco; the Mayor of Taguig, Ms Maria Laarni Lopez Cayetano; the Regional Director of South East Asia and South Asia of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Mr Ronald Ho; and senior representatives from major local business chambers.

The HKETO Jakarta will be hosting events in Malaysia in the coming two weeks to celebrate Chinese New Year.



## **DH conducts enforcement operation “Pipepurge” against waterpipe smoking in no smoking areas (with photos)**

The Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office (TACO) of the Department of Health (DH) conducted an enforcement operation, codenamed "Pipepurge", in Mong Kok last night (February 13) against illegal waterpipe smoking activities in no smoking areas and a total of three fixed penalty notices (FPNs) were issued.

During the operation, officers from TACO (including plainclothes officers) carried out inspections and enforcement action at one bar in Mong Kok, and issued a total of three FPNs to persons illegally smoking waterpipes. TACO's investigation is ongoing, and prosecution may also be taken against operators of the bar who are suspected of aiding and abetting smoking offences. TACO will also refer the cases to the Liquor Licensing Board for appropriate follow-up action.

Under the Ordinance, conducting a smoking act in a statutory no smoking area (such as indoor areas of bars or restaurants) is prohibited. Any person doing a smoking act in statutory no smoking areas is liable to a fixed penalty of \$1,500. Moreover, where smoking products (including waterpipes) are sold, in bars or otherwise, the restrictions on the promotion and sale of

smoking products stipulated in the Ordinance apply. Offenders are liable on a summary conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000. Venue managers of statutory no smoking areas are empowered by the Ordinance to request a smoking offender cease the act; if the offender is not co-operative, the manager may contact the Police for assistance.

In addition, under the Criminal Procedure Ordinance, any person who aids, abets, counsels or procures the commission by another person of any offence shall be guilty of the same offence.

"The DH will continue to closely monitor and take stringent enforcement action against illegal waterpipe smoking. Last year (2024), TACO conducted 162 operations against illegal waterpipe smoking activities in no smoking areas. A total of 162 FPNs were issued against smoking offenders, while 89 summonses were issued to staff members and operators of the bars/restaurants for other related offences," the Head of TACO, Dr Fung Ying, said.

Dr Fung reminded the public that a waterpipe is also a smoking product, and its combustion of fuel (e.g. charcoal) releases carbon monoxide. Exposure to a low concentration of carbon monoxide can lead to a range of symptoms such as dizziness, headache, tiredness and nausea; whereas exposure to a high concentration of carbon monoxide can lead to impaired vision, disturbed co-ordination, unconsciousness, brain damage or even death. People should seek medical attention immediately if they suspect they are developing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Due to deeper inhalation and longer smoking sessions, waterpipe users usually inhale more toxins than they would when smoking cigarettes. A typical one-hour waterpipe smoking session exposes the user to 100 to 200 times the volume of smoke inhaled from a single conventional cigarette. Moreover, sharing a waterpipe apparatus increases the risk of transmitting infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis.

Dr Fung cautioned against waterpipe smoking and the use of other smoking products. Smokers should quit smoking as early as possible for their own health and that of others. For more information on the hazards of waterpipe smoking, please visit [www.livetobaccofree.hk/pdfs/waterpipe\\_leaflet\\_new.pdf](http://www.livetobaccofree.hk/pdfs/waterpipe_leaflet_new.pdf).





---

## Appointments to Committee on Financial Assistance for Family Members of those who Sacrifice their Lives to Save Others

The Government today (February 14) announced the reappointment of one incumbent member, as well as the appointments of three new members, namely Miss Dana Lau Sing-she, Ms Janus Lau Yuen-yee and Mr Solomon Yung Sze-hon, to the Committee on Financial Assistance for Family Members of those who Sacrifice their Lives to Save Others for a term of two years with effect from February 15, 2025.

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, welcomed the appointments and said he looks forward to working closely with members of the Committee in the new term. Mr Sun also thanked the outgoing members, Miss Edna Chow On-lai, Mr Law King-shing and Ms Wong May-kwan, for their contributions to the Committee.

The Committee considers and approves applications under the Financial Assistance Scheme for Family Members of those who Sacrifice their Lives to Save Others. The Scheme represents the Government's recognition of the brave acts and sacrifice undertaken by these individuals and seeks to alleviate the financial hardship that their family members may face as a consequence of their death.

The list of non-official members of the Committee in the new term is as

follows:

Miss Dana Lau Sing-she

Ms Janus Lau Yuen-yee

Ms Lee Sau-king

Mr Solomon Yung Sze-hon