

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, June 28, 2019 is 104.7 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

Travellers reminded of precautions against infectious diseases for healthy trips in summer vacation

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (June 28) reminded members of the public who plan to travel during the summer vacation to stay alert to the situation of infectious diseases in their destinations, and to observe strict personal and environmental hygiene to guard against some common and travel-related diseases.

A. Dengue Fever

Regarding the latest dengue fever (DF) situation in Hong Kong, from June 21 to 27, the CHP recorded two imported DF cases. The patients had been to Indonesia (one case) and Malaysia (one case) during the incubation period.

As of yesterday (June 27), 67 cases had been recorded this year, all of which were imported. The cases were mainly imported from Thailand (14), Indonesia (12) and Malaysia (12).

The CHP has been closely monitoring the latest DF situation in neighbouring and overseas areas. DF is endemic in many tropical and subtropical areas of the world. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), some Asian countries are experiencing unusually high numbers of DF cases for this time of year. The number of cases in several countries including Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam was about two to four times the number for the same period in 2018.

According to the announcement of the Health Commission of Guangdong Province on June 13, the epidemic season of DF started early this year in Guangdong. As of June 12, 240 cases had been recorded in Guangdong this year, which was significantly higher than that in the same period last year (44 cases). In Taiwan, 208 cases (including 27 local cases) have been recorded in 2019 (as of June 27).

Detailed information on the latest DF situation in Hong Kong as well as neighbouring and overseas countries and areas this year is uploaded to the

CHP's website

(www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df_imported_cases_and_overseas_figures_eng.pdf).

"To prevent mosquito-borne diseases, travellers should wear loose, light-coloured, long-sleeved tops and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or exposed parts of the body. Travellers returning from areas affected by DF and Zika virus infection should apply insect repellent for 14 days or at least 21 days respectively upon arrival in Hong Kong," a spokesman for the CHP said.

B. Measles

There has been a global resurgence of measles since 2018 with worsening of the situation in 2019. According to the provisional data from the WHO, the number of measles cases had quadrupled worldwide in the first three months of 2019 as compared with the same period of 2018. In the first two months of 2019, 34 300 measles cases have been reported in the WHO European Region, as compared with 83 540 and 25 869 cases in the whole year of 2018 and 2017 respectively. In Southeast Asia, the outbreak in the Philippines is on-going with nearly 35 000 cases reported in 2019 (as of May 11) and the incidence in some countries, such as Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, remained much higher than that in Hong Kong.

"Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles. Members of the public who are planning to travel to places with high incidence or outbreaks of measles should review their vaccination history and past medical history, especially people born outside Hong Kong who might not have received measles vaccination during childhood. Those with incomplete vaccination, unknown vaccination history or unknown immunity against measles are urged to consult their doctor for advice on vaccination at least two weeks before departure. Pregnant women and women preparing for pregnancy who are not immune to measles as well as children aged under 1 year who are not due for the first dose of the measles, mumps and rubella combined vaccine under the [Hong Kong Childhood Immunisation Programme](#) are advised not to travel to places with outbreaks of measles," the spokesman said.

C. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome

Members of the public should also pay attention to cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) abroad. Countries in the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia, continue to report MERS cases from time to time, travellers should refrain from going to farms, barns or markets with camels and avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels. Most of the cases reported in the Middle East had history of exposure to camels, consumption of camel milk or contact with other MERS patients.

Scientific evidence showed that camels are reservoirs for MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV). Camels infected with MERS-CoV may not show any signs of infection. Infected animals may shed MERS-CoV through nasal and eye discharge, faeces, and potentially in their milk and urine. The virus may also be found in the raw organs and meat of infected animals. Therefore, the

best protection is to practise good hygiene and avoid direct contact with all of these.

"From time to time, suspected MERS cases reported to the CHP for investigation involved patients with history of contact with camels in the Middle East. The CHP strongly advises travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS-CoV," the spokesman said.

D. Seasonal Influenza

Increased influenza detections were reported from countries in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere. The 2019 influenza season appeared to have started earlier than previous years in some countries including Australia, Chile, South Africa and New Zealand. In Oceania, influenza activity increased across the continent, with influenza A(H3N2) being the dominant subtype. In Australia, influenza activity is high for this time of year as compared to previous years, and the majority of confirmed influenza cases were influenza A while the proportion of influenza B has been steadily increasing. Influenza season also started earlier in New Zealand, with co-circulation of influenza A(H3N2) and B viruses. The positivity rate of influenza viruses was one of the highest for this period in recent years.

Members of the general public aged 6 months or above (except those with known contraindications) who have not yet received any seasonal influenza vaccination in the 2018-19 season can still receive it for personal protection against seasonal influenza. Moreover, people should always take the following measures to prevent respiratory and other infections:

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70-80 per cent alcohol-based handrub as an effective alternative;
- Cover nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly in a lidded rubbish bin;
- Put on a surgical mask when develop respiratory symptoms;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation; and
- Avoid going to crowded or poorly ventilated public places; high-risk individuals may consider putting on surgical masks in such places.

The public may also visit the CHP's pages on [DF](#), [measles](#), [MERS](#) and [seasonal influenza](#) for more information.

Tenders invited for Kai Tak Development – Stage 5B Infrastructure Works at the Former North Apron Area

The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) today (June 28) invited tenders for the contract for Kai Tak Development – Stage 5B Infrastructure Works at the Former North Apron Area.

The works mainly involve:

- * construction of a section of dual two-lane Road D1 connecting Olympic Avenue;
- * construction of single two-lane Road L9 and Road L16, and single-lane slip road S14;
- * construction of a pedestrian subway across Prince Edward Road East;
- * construction of an elevated walkway across the Kai Tak River;
- * renovation of two existing pedestrian subways, and modification and renovation of one existing pedestrian subway; and
- * construction of associated footpaths, street lighting, drainage, sewerage, water mains, landscaping, electrical and mechanical works and ancillary works.

The works are scheduled to commence in the fourth quarter of 2019 and will take about 59 months to complete.

An invitation to the tender was gazetted today. The closing time for the tender is noon on August 23, 2019.

The CEDD has commissioned AECOM Asia Company Limited to design and supervise the works. Interested contractors may obtain the tender forms and further particulars from the company at 8/F, Grand Central Plaza, Tower 2, 138 Sha Tin Rural Committee Road, Sha Tin.

Details of the tender notice are available at the CEDD's website (www.cedd.gov.hk/eng/tender/contract/tender/index.html). For enquiries, please call AECOM Asia Company Limited at 3922 9000 during office hours.

Lifesaving services at Cafeteria New Beach and Golden Beach resume

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department has announced that the lifesaving services at Cafeteria New Beach and Golden Beach in Tuen Mun District resumed today (June 28). The lifesaving services at the beaches were suspended earlier due to an insufficient number of lifeguards on duty.

Young music campers to showcase musical achievements in concerts

More than 400 young musicians and choristers who participated in the 2019 Hong Kong Youth Music Camp will perform a Chinese and Western music repertoire in two concerts to be held in July and August to showcase their musical achievements.

Presented by the Music Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the 2019 Hong Kong Youth Music Camp Concerts will be held at 8pm on July 28 and at 3pm on August 4 at the Concert Halls of the Hong Kong City Hall and the Hong Kong Cultural Centre respectively. The concerts will be conducted by internationally acclaimed maestros and are part of the summer programme International Arts Carnival 2019.

The first concert will be performed by the camp's Junior Chinese Orchestra, Symphonic Band and Chinese Orchestra. Highlights of the programme will include Wang Danhong's Song of Labour from "Redden Sorghum", which reveals the unremitting efforts of the people of northeast China to keep moving forward in life; Johan de Meij's selections from Symphony No.1 "The Lord of the Rings"; and the first and second movements of the dynamic and passionate "Ode to Mulan" by Zhang Yibing. The conductors will be the Conductor of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music Affiliated Secondary School Youth Chinese Orchestra, Liu Jie; the Former Associate Professor of Conducting of the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland, Dr Peter Ettrup Larsen; and the Resident Conductor of the China Broadcasting Chinese Orchestra and National Class One Conductor, Zhang Lie.

The second concert will be conducted by the Professor of Conducting, Yale School of Music, USA and the Artistic Director to Yale International Choral Festival, USA, Dr Jeffrey Douma; the Associate Professor of Violin, University of Iowa School of Music, USA and featured artist at the conferences of the Music Teachers National Association and the Suzuki Association of the Americas, Dr Scott Conklin; and the Professor of Violin, Whitworth University, USA and Conductor of the Whitworth Orchestra, USA, Dr Philip Baldwin. Under their batons, the camp's Youth Choir, Senior Strings

and Junior Symphony Orchestra will perform music pieces including Rachmaninoff's intensely expressive cappella chorus, Bogorodytse Dyevo, from "All-Night Vigil", Op. 37; the world premiere of "Snow Ash" for Violin Solo and String Orchestra by contemporary composer Hu Ching-chu; and a classic piece by Sibelius, Finale from "Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43".

The Hong Kong Youth Music Camp is a major annual summer activity of the Music Office which provides intensive training to musicians in a scenic campsite setting. Participants can also enjoy recreational and sports facilities at the camp.

Tickets for the concerts priced at \$55, \$75 and \$95 are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2796 7523 or 3842 7784 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/mo/activities/2019hkymcc.html.