

CHP investigates influenza A outbreak at primary school in Southern District

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (December 4) investigating an influenza A outbreak at a primary school in Southern District, and again reminded the public to maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene against influenza.

The outbreak involves nine boys and nine girls aged 5 to 8, as well as three female staff members, who developed cough, sore throat and fever since November 22. All of them sought medical attention. Among them, one student required hospitalisation and was discharged following treatment. All patients are now in a stable condition.

The respiratory specimens of eight students and three staff members tested positive for influenza A virus.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit and advised the school to adopt necessary infection control measures against respiratory infections. The school has been put under medical surveillance.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "To prevent outbreaks of influenza and other respiratory infections, it is of prime importance that children with fever, regardless of the presence of respiratory symptoms, should not be allowed to attend school. They should seek medical advice and avoid school till 48 hours after the fever has subsided. Schools should also measure and record students' body temperature properly."

Schools are reminded to follow the [Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases](#) on preventive and control measures as well as management of outbreaks, which should be reported to the CHP for prompt follow-up.

"Influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons. Given that influenza vaccines are safe and effective, all persons aged 6 months or above, except those with known contraindications, are recommended to receive Seasonal Influenza Vaccine (SIV) for personal protection," the spokesman said.

As it is already December and Hong Kong will soon enter the winter influenza season, eligible persons are urged to receive SIV early for protection against seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks to develop antibodies. Vaccination among family members is key to protecting their personal and family's health."

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccine for personal protection, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses. For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).

Fourth meeting of Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development held

The Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development held its fourth meeting today (December 4) to deliberate on talent and manpower development in Hong Kong.

At the meeting, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, gave a presentation on talent and manpower development in Hong Kong. Members noted the work of the Human Resources Planning Commission which was established in April 2018 under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary. They were also briefed on the manpower challenges faced by Hong Kong including an ageing population, a low fertility rate, a dwindling workforce and a fast-changing and competitive global economic environment. Members provided constructive advice on the various talent admission schemes in Hong Kong and how education and training could be enhanced to improve the quality and quantity of talent in Hong Kong.

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, said, "Talent is the most important driver for Hong Kong's continued development, and education and training are the key to nurturing talent. In addition to enhancing the quality of local talent, various schemes are in place to attract talent outside Hong Kong and we will continue to review their effectiveness and seek ways to improve them as and when necessary."

The Chief Executive also hosted a lunch today before the Council meeting for her advisers as well as chairmen and vice-chairmen of relevant advisory and statutory bodies to facilitate exchange of views on the future development of Hong Kong.

The Council is a high-level body to advise the Chief Executive on Hong Kong's future development and strategies for driving innovation. It gives advice on Hong Kong's strategic positioning in the global and regional contexts and directions of economic development with an aim of enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness and growth potential, provides guidance on evidence-based research and studies on related issues with a view to enhancing policy formulation to meet changing development needs, and advises on stakeholder engagement and public participation in the policy formulation and consensus building process.

A gloomy and warm November

As the northeast monsoon affecting the south China coast was relatively weak, southerlies dominated in the lower atmosphere and water vapour built up, causing Hong Kong's weather in November 2018 to be cloudier and gloomier than usual. The mean amount of cloud in the month was 79 per cent, 25 per cent above the normal figure of 54 per cent – the highest on record for November. The duration of bright sunshine in the month was only 123.9 hours, about 31 per cent lower than the normal figure of 180.1 hours and the eighth lowest on record for November. Despite the gloomy weather, the month was warmer than usual. The mean temperature of 22.9 degrees and mean minimum temperature of 21.4 degrees were 1.1 degrees and 1.6 degrees above the respective normal figures, and were the ninth and fourth highest on record for November. The month was also wetter than usual with 73.4 millimetres of rainfall, about 95 per cent above the normal figure of 37.6 millimetres. The accumulated rainfall up to November this year was 2151.0 millimetres, a deficit of about 9 per cent compared to the normal figure of 2371.7 millimetres for the same period.

Tropical cyclone Yutu edged north slowly towards the coast of eastern Guangdong and weakened gradually on November 1 and 2. It eventually dissipated over the northeastern part of the South China Sea in the morning of November 3. Under the combined effect of the northeast monsoon and tropical cyclone Yutu, it was windy and dry with sunny periods in Hong Kong on the first day of November. While local winds subsided gradually, it was mainly cloudy with a few rain patches over the next two days.

Affected by the northeast monsoon, the weather turned windy with a few light rain patches in Hong Kong on November 4. As the cloud band covering the coast of Guangdong dissipated gradually, the weather in Hong Kong became generally fine over the next three days. With a replenishment of the northeast monsoon arriving at the coastal areas of Guangdong in the morning of November 8, there were sunny periods with one or two light rain patches in Hong Kong. The weather turned cloudier and windier with light rain on November 9 and 10 as winds from the east strengthened. With the easterly airstream moderating gradually, there were sunny periods during the day on November 11 and 12. The temperature at the Hong Kong Observatory rose to a maximum of 28.0 degrees in the afternoon of November 12, the highest of the month. Under the influence of the northeast monsoon, winds strengthened on November 13, though the weather remained generally fine apart from a few light rain patches in the morning and at night.

Under the influence of a fresh to strong easterly airstream, the weather in Hong Kong became mainly cloudy again with a few light rain patches from November 14 to 17. The weather improved with sunny periods during the day on November 18. With a replenishment of the northeast monsoon reaching the south China coastal areas, it was slightly cooler with sunny intervals on November 19 and 20.

There were sunny periods during the day in Hong Kong on November 21. As a cold front moved across the coastal areas of Guangdong and winds from the north strengthened, the weather turned cloudy with a few rain patches at night. Affected by the northeast monsoon behind the cold front, the weather became appreciably cooler and drier, with sunny periods from November 22 to 24. With a broad rain-bearing cloud band covering southern China, local weather became cloudy and rainy from November 25 to 28. More than 20 millimetres of rainfall were recorded on November 25. Under the rain, the temperature at the Hong Kong Observatory dropped to a minimum of 17.0 degrees in the morning of November 26, the lowest of the month. With the cloud band thinning out gradually, sunshine returned on the last two days of the month.

Four tropical cyclones occurred over the South China Sea and the western North Pacific in November 2018.

Details of issuance and cancellation of various warnings/signals in November are summarised in Table 1. Monthly meteorological figures and departures from normal for November are tabulated in Table 2.

Extension of voice-navigated e-Channel service to Lo Wu Control Point

The Immigration Department announced today (December 4) that with effect from December 5, an e-Channel equipped with voice navigation function will be in operation at both the arrival hall and the departure hall of the Lo Wu Control Point (LWCP), with a view to enabling visually impaired persons to perform self-service immigration clearance. They will be able to locate the voice-navigated e-Channels by using the Braille maps installed at the LWCP and follow the tactile guided paths leading to the e-Channels for self-service immigration clearance.

The voice-navigated e-Channel service was first introduced at the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point in September 2013. Currently, the service is available at the Macau Ferry Terminal Control Point, the Shenzhen Bay Control Point, the China Ferry Terminal Control Point, the Express Rail Link West Kowloon Control Point and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Point to enable visually impaired persons to enjoy self-service immigration clearance service. During the development and testing processes of the voice-navigated e-Channel system, the Immigration Department maintained close liaison with organisations in connection with visually impaired persons to collect feedback on the system's operation and implementation, so as to provide greater convenience for visually impaired persons.

For more details on the usage of the voice-navigated e-Channel service, please visit the website of the Immigration Department at www.immd.gov.hk.

Serious Incident Bulletin on Air India aircraft released

The Air Accident Investigation Authority (AAIA) today (December 4) released Serious Incident Bulletin 6/2018 in relation to an Air India Boeing 787-8 aircraft (registration mark VT-ANE) which deviated from the normal glide path when descending to Runway 07R, resulting in a go-around, that occurred on October 20, 2018, at Hong Kong International Airport.

A spokesperson for the AAIA said that the bulletin contains information relating to the serious incident collected up to the time of issue, and must be regarded as tentative.

"The AAIA will continue to collect and study all relevant information in order to determine the circumstances and causes of the serious incident. More in-depth investigation and analysis have to be conducted before any conclusion can be drawn," the spokesperson said.

The full Serious Incident Bulletin 6/2018 is available for download from the AAIA webpage (www.thb.gov.hk/aaia/eng/investigation_reports/index.htm).