

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, November 8, 2024 is 105.4 (down 0.3 against yesterday's index).

Transport Department alerts public to fraudulent websites purported to be from HKeToll

The Transport Department (TD) today (November 8) alerted members of the public to the following fraudulent website addresses which pretend to be the HKeToll and seek to deceive users into making payments and obtain their credit card information:

1. [https://hktollse\[.\]top/hk](https://hktollse[.]top/hk)
2. [https://hketollcgv\[.\]top/k](https://hketollcgv[.]top/k)
3. [https://hketolldgv\[.\]top/k](https://hketolldgv[.]top/k)
4. [https://hketolll\[.\]top/hk](https://hketolll[.]top/hk)
5. [https://hktollp\[.\]top/hk](https://hktollp[.]top/hk)
6. [https://hktollut\[.\]top/hk](https://hktollut[.]top/hk)
7. [https://hktwoll\[.\]top/hk](https://hktwoll[.]top/hk)

The TD clarifies that the above websites have no connection with the HKeToll and has referred the case to the Police for follow up. The TD reiterates that the HKeToll only uses "#HKeToll" as the sender ID for issuing SMS messages to users or vehicle owners. Users or vehicle owners must log in to the HKeToll website (hketoll.gov.hk) or mobile app to pay outstanding tolls online.

Members of the public should stay alert when receiving messages without the prefix "#" but purportedly issued by the HKeToll or any unidentified messages, and should not visit suspicious websites or disclose any personal information. Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the websites concerned should contact the Police. For enquiries about the HKeToll, please call 3853 7333.

Speech by SJ at launch of Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy (English only) (with photo/video)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, at the launch of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy under Hong Kong Legal Week 2024 today (November 8):

Vice-Minister Mr Wang Zhenjiang (Vice-Minister of Justice), Commissioner Cui (Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Mr Cui Jianchun), the Secretary General of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR, Mr Wang Songmiao, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. Today marks a milestone as we embark on a new journey to nurture legal talents in Hong Kong, China as a whole, and countries along the Belt and Road, as well as across the globe. The ceremony today has been graced by the presence of so many distinguished guests from home and abroad. I am deeply grateful to each and every one of you, witnessing together the launch of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy.

I have to confess that I am rather excited and also emotional today. This is because the establishment of the Academy is very much my brainchild. Its gestation, from conception to delivery, lasted for more than a year. I am thrilled to see the birth of a healthy and energetic baby full of potential today.

The initiative to establish the Academy was first mentioned in the Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address. To take forward this initiative, the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Office and the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Expert Committee were set up on October 8 this year. I am very pleased that Dr Yang Ling, a renowned scholar in international legal and dispute resolution with extensive management experience, has agreed to take up the post of Director of the Office. On the other hand, the Expert Committee consists of three advisory boards, namely the International Advisory Board, the Mainland Advisory Board and the Hong Kong Advisory Board. We are truly honoured that 17 distinguished legal experts specialising in a wide range of legal subjects from different jurisdictions have agreed to be the founding members of the Expert Committee.

The Expert Committee has just held its first Plenary Meeting yesterday, during which expert members shared their professional insights and experiences, and offered valuable advice, in different areas. Some of the eminent experts from overseas have graciously taken the time to come all the way from places as far as, for example, Europe to Hong Kong to join us at the Hong Kong Legal Week and today in the launching ceremony. I thank all of you

for your unwavering support.

As foreshadowed in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address announced a few weeks ago, the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy is officially launched today.

The Academy seeks to capitalise on Hong Kong's unique strengths and advantages made possible by the "one country, two systems" principle as the only bilingual common law system, using both English and Chinese, with international characteristics, which always enjoy a high reputation around the world. It will serve as a capacity building, as well as knowledge and experience sharing, platform for legal professionals in Hong Kong, the Mainland and other countries, in particular those along the Belt and Road.

Insofar as Hong Kong legal professionals are concerned, they are likely to be both teachers and students of the Academy. I am a strong believer in the saying, in Chinese "教者亦學，學者亦教", which means when you teach someone, both the teacher and the student will benefit. Insofar as our country China is concerned, the establishment of the Academy is indeed extremely timely because, in the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Further Deepening Reform Comprehensively to Advance Chinese Modernization adopted on July 18, 2024, there is a specific section on strengthening the rule of law in foreign-related affairs by, among other things, the training of legal professionals for foreign-related affairs. Turning to friends from other countries, in particular those along the modern Belt and Road, as the Belt and Road Initiative has just entered into its second decade this year, it is clearly essential for us to strengthen our legal capabilities jointly to ensure that our future co-operation will be based on a solid foundation of the rule of law.

The child is born today. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to bring him up together. Although this child's genetic parent is Hong Kong, he is meant to be a child belonging not just to Hong Kong, but also China as a whole and friends around the world. It is in our common interest to see this child growing up wisely, strongly and happily.

Thank you very much.



Hong Kong Customs combats online sale of counterfeit goods (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs conducted an enforcement operation on November 5 to combat the online sale of counterfeit goods, and seized about 15 000 suspected counterfeit items with an estimated market value of about \$2 million. One person was arrested.

Customs earlier received information alleging that suspected counterfeit goods were put on sale through an online shop on a social media platform. Later, Customs officers posed as customers and conducted a test purchase. After an in-depth investigation and with the assistance of trademark owners, Customs officers on November 5 raided an office and storage of the online shop located in Yuen Long. A batch of suspected counterfeit goods, including clothing and skincare products, was seized.

During the operation, Customs arrested a 48-year-old woman suspected to be connected with the case. She has been released on bail pending further investigation. The investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to step up inspections and enforcement to vigorously combat the sale of different kinds of counterfeit goods.

Customs reminds consumers to procure goods at reputable shops or websites and to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt. Traders should also be cautious in merchandising since the sale of counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale any goods with a forged trademark commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected counterfeiting activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).

Sydney ETO supports woodwind concert in Melbourne to foster cultural exchanges (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Sydney (Sydney ETO) supported the "Woodwind Quintet – Hong Kong and Australia Cultural Exchange Concert" in Melbourne, Australia, yesterday (November 7) to promote cultural exchanges between Hong Kong and Australia, and showcase the young musical talent of Hong Kong.

The concert featured a diverse selection of classical repertoire performed by M•eureka!, a chamber group formed by talented young musicians from Hong Kong. Associate Professor of Music (Performance – Clarinet) of the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music Mr David Griffiths was invited as a guest musician to perform with M•eureka! in the concert to deepen musical exchanges between Hong Kong and Australia. The concert was well received by around 500 audience members.

The Director of the Sydney ETO, Mr Ricky Chong, said in his welcoming remarks that the Sydney ETO has a deep commitment to fostering cultural exchanges between Hong Kong and Australia.

"Apart from supporting Hong Kong arts talent to showcase their works overseas, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is also dedicated to enhancing our arts infrastructure to bring in more local and international arts productions. Some of the new world-class venues in Hong Kong include the Lyric Theatre Complex in the West Kowloon Cultural District, the East Kowloon Cultural Centre, and the newly opened stadium at the Kai Tak Sports Park which can house an audience of 50 000. We can't wait to have you in Hong Kong to enjoy the exciting arts and cultural events," Mr Chong said.

He also shared with the audience the latest initiatives announced in "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address", including the reform of various aspects of the talent admission regime to build a quality talent pool for long-term development.

M•eureka! is a newly founded chamber group formed by young professional musicians who have all graduated from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. The group aims to promote classical music development in Hong Kong by presenting traditional chamber music as well as newly arranged orchestral works.

