

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, June 14, 2024 is 106.5 (up 0.2 against as yesterday's index).

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (June 14) released the latest grading of water quality for 39 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and one non-gazetted beach (see Note 2).

Twelve beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), 23 as Fair (Grade 2), and five as Poor (Grade 3).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Chung Hom Kok Beach	Middle Bay Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach*	Repulse Bay Beach*
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	South Bay Beach*
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*	St. Stephen's Beach
Kiu Tsui Beach	Tong Fuk Beach
Lo So Shing Beach	Turtle Cove Beach

Grade 2 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach*	Lido Beach*
Big Wave Bay Beach*	Lower Cheung Sha Beach
Butterfly Beach*	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*
Cafeteria New Beach	Pui O Beach*
Casam Beach*	Shek O Beach*
Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach*	Silver Mine Bay Beach*
Clear Water Bay First Beach	Silverstrand Beach*
Clear Water Bay Second Beach*	Stanley Main Beach*
Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach	Tai Po Lung Mei Beach*
Golden Beach*	Trio Beach
Hoi Mei Wan Beach	Upper Cheung Sha Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	

Grade 3 beaches are:

Approach Beach	Kadoorie Beach
Cafeteria Old Beach	Ting Kau Beach*
Castle Peak Beach	

Compared with the grading released last week, Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach has been upgraded from Grade 3 to Grade 2, and Castle Peak Beach from Grade 4 to Grade 3. Upper Cheung Sha Beach has been changed from Grade 1 to Grade 2.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the Beach Water Quality Forecast mobile application (available for download from: www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQApp) or the dedicated beach water quality forecast page (www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast) on the EPD's beach thematic website.

Note 1: Lifesaving services are provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at 21 gazetted beaches, marked with an asterisk (*) above, from June 1. Due to the damage caused to the footpaths leading to Chung Hom Kok Beach by landslides, the beach is temporarily closed until further notice. For details, please refer to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department's Special Announcement (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/index.html).

Note 2: This refers to Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach which is a non-gazetted beach that has no lifesaving service.

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 June 13 to noon today (June 14), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 264 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 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 59 044 samples of food imported from Japan (including 38 135 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 14 640 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

[DSJ concludes visit to Beijing \(with photo\)](#)

The Deputy Secretary for Justice, Mr Cheung Kwok-kwan, called on the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) today (June 14) in Beijing to meet with Vice-Minister of Justice Mr Hu Weilie. They had in-depth discussions on the latest developments on the construction of rule of law in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and related issues, nurturing foreign-related legal talent, developing Hong Kong as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region and more.

Mr Cheung expressed his gratitude to the MoJ for its full and continuous support for Hong Kong's legal sector in better integrating into the overall national development, and for its tremendous efforts in taking forward the extension of the period of the pilot scheme for Hong Kong and Macao legal practitioners to practise in the nine Mainland municipalities in the GBA until 2026, as well as lowering the practice experience threshold to three years.

He pointed out that the GBA Legal Professional Examination has been held three times. The latest examination is to be held by the end of this month. The Department of Justice (DoJ) will continue to work closely with the relevant Mainland authorities to provide practical legal training for GBA lawyers, and promote the establishment of a platform in Hong Kong for GBA lawyers, with a view to empowering the professional development of GBA lawyers more systematically to nurture more foreign-related legal talent with dual qualifications for the country. Meanwhile, the DoJ will spare no effort in promoting the establishment of a GBA Legal Information Platform to provide a reliable and comprehensive information platform for stakeholders, contributing to the construction of rule of law in the GBA.

In addition, Mr Cheung said that the DoJ is actively taking forward the establishment of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy, with a view to leveraging the unique advantages of Hong Kong's common law system to contribute to the country's nurturing of foreign-related legal talent.

He was grateful for the strong support of the MoJ, which attaches great importance to the DoJ's initiatives.

Mr Cheung will return to Hong Kong this afternoon.



Designation of North Lantau Marine Park gazetted

The Government gazetted today (June 14) the designation of the North Lantau Marine Park (NLMP).

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said, "The NLMP will be the eighth and largest marine park in Hong Kong, covering about 2 400 hectares (ha) of water. Designation of the NLMP will greatly increase Hong Kong's protected marine habitat from about 6 117 ha to about 8 517 ha. The designation of the NLMP is crucial for conservation of the Chinese White Dolphins (CWD) and the marine environment in North Lantau waters, and is one of the measures committed in the approved Environmental Impact Assessment Report of the Three-Runway System project of Hong Kong International Airport for mitigating the impact arising from the project on marine ecology."

The spokesman added, "The NLMP will provide critical linkages with the nearby Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park (about 1 200 ha) and the Brothers Marine Park (about 970 ha) to form a matrix of connected marine protected areas totalling about 4 570 ha in North Lantau waters for better protection of the important habitats of the CWD. Furthermore, the NLMP will be contiguous with the Pearl River Estuary Chinese White Dolphin National Nature Reserve established in Guangdong Province, thereby linking the marine protected areas in Hong Kong and the Mainland, providing important connections among these core CWD habitats, and facilitating the movement of CWD between such habitats. The proposed NLMP also connects with the Hong Kong International Airport Approach Areas to form an interlinked water body and provide a synergistic effect for the conservation of marine ecology and fisheries resources."

The draft map of the NLMP was made available for public inspection for a period of 60 days from March 3 to May 1, 2023. The Country and Marine Parks Authority did not receive any objection during the period. The Chief Executive-in-Council approved the draft map in accordance with section

14(1)(a) of the Marine Parks Ordinance (Cap. 476) on September 5, 2023. Copies of the approved map signed by the Authority were deposited in the Land Registry, headquarters of the AFCD and headquarters of the Marine Department for public inspection in accordance with section 14(5) of the Ordinance. The deposit of the maps was notified in the Gazette by the AFCD on September 29, 2023.

The spokesman said that activities in the waters concerned will be regulated by the Ordinance and the Marine Parks and Marine Reserves Regulation (Cap. 476A) after the designation of the marine park. In the long run, it can provide a better habitat for marine life and, in particular, be conducive to protecting marine mammals and maintaining marine biodiversity.

The Marine Parks (Designation) (Amendment) Order 2024 will be tabled at the Legislative Council on June 19, 2024, for negative vetting and coming into effect on November 1, 2024.