

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, November 18, 2024 is 106.4 (up 0.1 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, November 16, 2024 is 106.3 (down 0.1 against last Friday's index).

Opening remarks by STL at Opening Ceremony of Hong Kong Maritime Week 2024 cum World Maritime Merchants Forum 2024 (English only) (with photo)

â€‹Following are the opening remarks by the Chairman of the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board and Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung, at the Opening Ceremony of Hong Kong Maritime Week 2024 cum World Maritime Merchants Forum 2024 today (November 18):

The Honourable Acting Chief Executive K K Chan (Acting Chief Executive, Mr Chan Kwok-ki), The Honourable Vice-Chairman C Y Leung (Vice-Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Mr C Y Leung), Director Zheng Yanxiong (Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)), Commissioner Cui Jianchun (Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR), Vice Minister Fu Xuyin (Vice Minister of Transport), Mr Miao Jianmin (Chairman of the China Merchants Group), distinguished guests, friends of the global maritime community, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It is indeed my great pleasure to join you all in the opening of the eighth edition of Hong Kong Maritime Week (HKMW) and the fourth World Maritime Merchants Forum. Once again, we have two great events under one roof this year.

With the staunch support from 14 support organisations, the week-long HKMW will feature a comprehensive line-up of activities, with an aim to ignite discussions by industry practitioners on important maritime topics and raise the general community's interest towards the maritime industry.

The global maritime sector is undergoing profound transformation in recent years, driven by digitalisation, decarbonisation, geopolitical and

trade dynamics. The global maritime community are responding flexibly and effectively to the forces of change.

We, in Hong Kong, are getting ourselves prepared for both the challenges and opportunities ahead. Last December, the Hong Kong Government launched an Action Plan on Maritime and Port Development Strategy, outlining 10 strategies and 32 action measures from four directions to consolidate and enhance Hong Kong's status as an international maritime centre. This year, the Policy Address has unveiled a myriad of other important and significant measures to develop Hong Kong as an international maritime centre.

Enhancing Hong Kong's role as a maritime "super connector" has always been on our priority, and this is one of the purposes of Hong Kong Maritime Week. The programme of HKMW this year has seen even stronger connection with the international community. For the first time, the International Chamber of Shipping, supported by my Bureau, has staged a two-day Global Maritime Trade Summit. Ministers from around the world gathered in Hong Kong to conduct ministerial dialogues on issues affecting the international maritime community. This year, the HKMW will also debut a new theme on "Belt and Road Development", featuring activities that shine a spotlight on the developments under our country's Belt and Road Initiative.

I believe there are much more fun and opportunities you may find throughout the week. Our two flagship events, the World Maritime Merchants Forum and the Asian Logistics, Maritime and Aviation Conference, will run alongside for industry leaders to exchange market intelligence and identify business opportunities. The Captain's Table, being the industry's leading maritime start-up contest, will bring together aspiring innovators seeking to bring their innovation to market.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that you will enjoy our hospitality and find the events useful for connecting with your fellows in the industry. I wish you all a fruitful and rewarding week. Thank you.



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 November 15 to noon today (November 18), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 272 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category, in the past three days (including last Saturday and Sunday). 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 150 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, 2023, to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 100 807 samples of food imported from Japan (including 64 639 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 22 512 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples

passed the tests.

[Welcome remarks by STL at Asian Logistics, Maritime and Aviation Conference 2024 VIP Luncheon \(English only\) \(with photos\)](#)

Following are the welcome remarks by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung, at the Asian Logistics, Maritime and Aviation Conference (ALMAC) 2024 VIP Luncheon today (November 18):

Margaret (Executive Director of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Ms Margaret Fong), Minister Loke (Minister of Transport of Malaysia, Mr Anthony Loke), First Deputy Prime Minister Davitashvili (First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Mr Levan Davitashvili), Secretary of State His Excellency Heng Nan (Secretary of State of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport of Cambodia, Mr Heng Nan), Vice Minister His Excellency Manodham (Vice Minister of Public Works and Transport of Lao PDR, Mr Saysongkham Manodham), Deputy Minister Nguyen (Deputy Minister of Transport of Vietnam, Mr Nguyen Xuan Sang), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. Welcome to the VIP luncheon of the Asian Logistics, Maritime and Aviation Conference, or ALMAC in short. As ALMAC has entered into its 14th edition, it is my great pleasure to meet both new guests and familiar faces at this luncheon.

The theme of this year's ALMAC, "Shaping the Future of Supply Chains: Resilience and Sustainability", is no doubt very close to our hearts. It is especially true for "sustainability", as extreme weather events ravaging our world in ever greater frequency and ferocity remind us of our duties as global citizens to protect our Mother Earth. On that front, I am glad to say that the three industries that ALMAC covers, namely maritime, aviation and logistics industries, are rightly taking important steps to contribute to a green and sustainable future, and the Chief Executive of the HKSAR has in his 2024 Policy Address announced major policy initiatives steering the trade precisely in those directions in line with international trend.

Over 90 per cent of Hong Kong's cargo is transported by sea, so decarbonisation of our maritime industry is a crucial part of our sustainability strategy. Following the global trend of switching from traditional fossil maritime fuels to green ones, we promulgated last week an Action Plan on Green Maritime Fuel Bunkering, setting out a concrete blueprint for Hong Kong's development into a high-quality green maritime fuel

bunkering centre, including the development of necessary infrastructure, commitment to securing stable green maritime fuel supply, facilitating collaboration among stakeholders along the whole bunkering supply chain, greening up our government fleet to lead by example and actively forging partnership with other ports in a truly global effort to reduce carbon emissions of the maritime sector and meet the international decarbonisation target. We also incentivise green transformation of the vast fleet on our Hong Kong Registry by being the first jurisdiction in the world to have introduced a Carbon Intensity Indicator (CII)-based incentive scheme, with financial award available to those ships attaining the highest CII ratings.

Hong Kong is home to one of the world's busiest airports, and it only makes sense that we should lead in achieving sustainability in aviation as well. With the increasing adoption of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) by international airlines, Hong Kong is closely following international trend and making SAF usage our priority. We will speed up the reduction of carbon emissions by the aviation industry by mapping out the way forward for SAF. For this, the Airport Authority Hong Kong has recently completed a consultancy study on SAF, and the Government is making reference to the results in determining the next step, with a view to setting and announcing in 2025 a usage target for SAF for flights departing Hong Kong International Airport, thereby flying us into a greener aviation future.

Meanwhile, on logistics, green and sustainability is one of the five key directions we identified for the development of modern logistics in Hong Kong, as outlined in the Action Plan on Modern Logistics Development we rolled out last year. We understand that going green often involves investment in technologies and know-how, which is why we have launched financial schemes to sponsor the logistics trade for adopting smart technologies and taking training courses that are conducive to environmental, social and governance (ESG) enhancement of their operations. But with ESG being an evolving field, the logistics trade needs guidance on what steps to take and what achievable goal there is for them to become ESG-compliant. Therefore, the Government is now conducting a comprehensive study on the current status in Hong Kong's logistics sector, as well as an overview of the latest global trends in ESG development, with a view to formulating a practical roadmap for the logistics trade, so that they know what to do each step along the way to embrace ESG and ultimately enhance their competitiveness in an increasingly green-conscious world.

Ladies and gentlemen, sustainability is an irreversible trend for the maritime, aviation and logistics industries. It is only with sustainable practices in a world with finite resources that our trade can be resilient. Therefore, the discussion at ALMAC today is very timely and pertinent, and I hope that you will all have valuable takeaways from this event.

For those of you from outside Hong Kong, I also hope that you will come to appreciate the efforts that Hong Kong is making to establish itself as a staunch green player in the maritime, aviation and logistics fields, and through your interaction with the esteemed local industry leaders among us today, you will find Hong Kong a trusted partner with green credentials and,

as we often pride ourselves on, a "super-connector" bridging the East and West. We are here to help you to unleash the potential of new markets and unlock golden opportunities for further development.

Thank you once again for your support to ALMAC. I wish you a very fruitful event.



Public urged to support World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week

â€‹The Department of Health (DH) today (November 18) urged members of the public to use antibiotics appropriately in support of World Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Awareness Week, running from today to November 24 annually. The theme of the World Health Organization (WHO) this year is "Educate. Advocate. Act now."

AMR remains a top global threat to public health. According to a recent overseas study, it was estimated that about 4.71 million deaths were associated with bacterial AMR globally in 2021, including 1.14 million deaths attributable to bacterial AMR. Forecasts show that an estimated 1.91 million deaths attributable to AMR and 8.22 million deaths associated with AMR could occur globally in 2050. The WHO is urging a concerted global effort through cross-sector collaboration via the One Health approach to tackle this AMR threat.

In 2016 the Government set up a High Level Steering Committee on AMR (HLSC) and formulated the first Hong Kong Strategy and Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (Action Plan) in 2017. Since the launch of the Action Plan, a series of actions against AMR have been implemented in accordance with the strategies laid out in the plan by different action parties, with good progress being made. In 2022, the Government launched the second Action Plan to map out response strategies for the next phase,

covering the years from 2023 to 2027.

Educate

The Centre for Health Protection of the DH has long educated healthcare professionals and the public on the proper use of antibiotics, and has regularly monitored the knowledge, attitude and practice of the public on antibiotic resistance. Increasing knowledge of AMR among the general public has been noted according to the latest results of a survey in 2023. For instance, respondents correctly answering that cold and influenza should not be treated by antibiotics increased from 37 per cent in a 2016/17 survey to 84 per cent in the 2023 survey. Moreover, respondents who completed the entire course of antibiotic treatment as instructed by doctors increased from 88 per cent to 92 per cent in the same period. Yet, less than 40 per cent of respondents were aware that bacteria resistant to antibiotics can be spread from person to person.

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has long been educating the public to observe good personal and environmental hygiene throughout food preparation and handling to reduce the risk of AMR. In addition to organising talks and producing guidelines and pamphlets, the Centre for Food Safety of the FEHD has also incorporated relevant content into the training courses under the Hygiene Manager and Hygiene Supervisor Scheme.

Advocate

The Government has established a surveillance system to track the trends of antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance in the human, animal and food sectors according to the Action Plan. Further research will be conducted to better understand the situation of AMR in the local environment.

Antimicrobial Stewardship Programmes are in place in public and private hospitals to optimise the use of antibiotics by providing evidence-based antibiotic prescription guidelines for common infections as a reference. The guidelines will continue to be updated based on local epidemiology and international best practices.

Furthermore, to address the threat of emerging multidrug resistant organisms (MDROs) in residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs), the Government has enhanced support to RCHEs to strictly implement infection control measures and reduce the risk of transmission of MDROs in the RCHEs.

Regarding the livestock sector, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has implemented the "veterinary prescription-only medication supply" policy in phases at the local livestock farm level to tighten the regulation on the use of antimicrobials in animal husbandry, in particular those critically important antimicrobials for humans.

Act now

The Government has long attached great importance to tackling the issue

of AMR, and has acted promptly according to the latest international and local developments. Relevant bureaux/departments and organisations, including the Health Bureau, the DH, the FEHD, the AFCD and the Hospital Authority will continue to combat the challenge of AMR through cross-sector co-ordination and collaboration with private hospitals, professional bodies, academia and other stakeholders.

In light of the latest findings, a spokesman for the CHP urged members of the public to join the fight against antibiotic resistance by observing the following advice:

- Take adequate rest and drink plenty of water when having a cold or flu. If symptoms persist, consult a doctor and do not buy antibiotics without a prescription at community pharmacies;
- Do not demand antibiotics from doctors when not indicated. Only take antibiotics when advised by doctors and complete the whole course of treatment even if symptoms have improved;
- Follow precautions stated on the prescription bag and adopt appropriate infection control measures such as practising frequent hand hygiene, wearing a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, and disinfecting and covering all wounds properly to prevent person-to-person spread of resistant bacteria when taking antibiotics;
- Receive seasonal influenza and COVID-19 vaccines as effective means to prevent secondary bacterial infection, hence reducing the use of antibiotics and occurrence of AMR;
- Be aware of the risk of acquiring resistant bacteria from ready-to-eat (RTE) food. People taking antibiotics or antacids, and susceptible populations (such as pregnant women, infants and young children, the elderly and people with weakened immunity) are of higher risk and should therefore avoid eating raw and undercooked RTE foods; and
- Observe good hygienic practices in the kitchen when handling food to minimise the risk of cross-contamination by resistant bacteria.

The CHP will continue to work with doctors to enhance education on the appropriate use of antibiotics and to remind patients about risk of antimicrobial resistance. For details of information about antimicrobial resistance, please visit the CHP [thematic website](#) and the CHP [Facebook Page](#).