

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 14 to noon today (November 15), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 200 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, 2023, to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 100 463 samples of food imported from Japan (including 64 367 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 22 362 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (November 15) released the latest grading of water quality for 11 gazetted beaches that are open for swimming in November.

Eleven beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Big Wave Bay Beach	Middle Bay Beach
Casam Beach	Repulse Bay Beach
Clear Water Bay Second Beach	Silver Mine Bay Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach	Silverstrand Beach
Golden Beach	Stanley Main Beach
Lido Beach	

Compared with the grading released last week, there was no change in the grading for these beaches.

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, an 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 EPD's dedicated webpage on the beach water quality forecast (www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast).

Two approved outline zoning plans referred back for amendment

The Town Planning Board (the Board) announced today (November 15) that the Secretary for Development has referred two approved outline zoning plans (OZPs) to the Board, namely the approved Tsim Sha Tsui OZP and the approved Tsuen Wan OZP for amendments to reflect the latest land use proposals.

Each OZP incorporating the respective amendment(s) will be exhibited for public inspection under the provisions of the Town Planning Ordinance.

The Tsim Sha Tsui OZP and the Tsuen Wan OZP were last approved by the Chief Executive in Council in December 2013 and February 2024 respectively.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, November 15, 2024 is 106.4 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

Hong Kong Maritime Week 2024 to be staged next week in tandem with TV mini-drama series "Maritime Mission"

The annual highlight of the Hong Kong maritime and port industry, Hong Kong Maritime Week 2024 (HKMW 2024), will be held from next Sunday for seven consecutive days (November 17 to 23). Riding on the theme "Navigating to a Greener Future" and featuring the tagline "Propel Hong Kong", HKMW 2024 will showcase the strong commitment of Hong Kong's maritime industry to sailing towards sustainable shipping and reinforce Hong Kong's status as an international maritime centre.

HKMW 2024 has received strong support from local, Mainland and international maritime organisations, bringing together government officials around the globe and prominent leaders from the international maritime sector. Over 50 industry and public events will be hosted by more than 80 marine organisations, focusing on Belt and Road development, building up of maritime talent pool, education and career, Greater Bay Area development,

green shipping, Hong Kong's preferential tax regime, marine insurance, maritime law and arbitration, maritime technology, port and logistics, ship finance, ship management, shipping and maritime. Notably, Belt and Road development is a new theme added this year.

Major events worth highlighting are the Opening Ceremony of HKMW 2024 cum World Maritime Merchants Forum 2024; the Asian Logistics, Maritime and Aviation Conference; and the inaugural Global Maritime Trade Summit in Hong Kong. Dalian Maritime University's "Xin Hong Zhuan", the world's first intelligent research and training dual-purpose ship, will also make its debut visit to Hong Kong. Members of the public can make online reservations (p.nmg.com.hk/egnx15) for a free tour to gain a better understanding of the development of intelligent shipping and the nurturing of maritime talent.

With a view to stepping up publicity for HKMW 2024 and promoting Hong Kong's maritime industry, the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB) and Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB) have jointly produced a TV mini-drama series titled "Maritime Mission", comprising five episodes in total, each lasting two minutes. The programme will feature interviews with industry leaders, professionals and scholars, showcasing the solid strengths and advantages of Hong Kong's maritime industry while promoting how the Government and the trade are facilitating the long-term development of the industry through relevant initiatives and training programmes. Members of the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board (HKMPB), such as Mr Wellington Koo, Mr Angad Banga, Mr Timothy Lee, Mr Edward Liu, and Captain Lothair Lam, and lecturer of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Dr Judy Tong also took starring roles in the drama.

The drama series will be shown from next Monday (November 18) for five consecutive days on the following TVB channels and time slots. Programme replays are also available on the Facebook pages of the TLB and the HKMPB.

- 81 Jade – 9am and 2.30pm
- 82 TVB Plus – 2.15pm and 7pm (November 18, 19, 21 and 22) and 6.25pm (November 20)
- 83 TVB News Channel – 12.40pm, 4.45pm and 10.20pm

For more information on the HKMW and Hong Kong's maritime industry, please visit the websites of HKMW 2024 (www.hkmw.hk/tc/index.html) and the HKMPB (www.hkmpb.gov.hk/tc/index.html).