

Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures Released

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (July 6) that the official foreign currency reserve assets of Hong Kong amounted to US\$431.9 billion as at the end of June 2018 (end-May 2018: US\$432.2 billion) (Annex).

Including unsettled foreign exchange contracts, the foreign currency reserve assets of Hong Kong at the end of June 2018 amounted to US\$424.3 billion (end-May 2018: US\$424.6 billion).

The total foreign currency reserve assets of US\$431.9 billion represent about seven times the currency in circulation or 46% of Hong Kong dollar M3.

At present, four press releases relating to the Exchange Fund's data are issued by the HKMA each month. Three of these releases are issued to disseminate monetary data in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The fourth press release, on the Exchange Fund's Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account, is made in accordance with the HKMA's policy of maintaining a high level of transparency. For the month of July 2018, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

July 6	SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
July 13	SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund)
July 31	SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity
July 31	Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account

Update on number of dengue fever cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 6) reported the latest number of cases of dengue fever (DF), and again urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From June 29 to July 5, the CHP recorded five confirmed DF cases. The patients had been to Cambodia (two cases), Thailand (two cases) and Malaysia (one case) during the incubation period.

As of yesterday (July 5), 44 cases had been confirmed this year, all of which were imported cases. The cases were mainly imported from Thailand (19), the Philippines (eight) and Cambodia (six).

DF remains endemic in some areas in Asia and overseas. The latest figures for 2018 reveal that 25 408 cases have been recorded in Thailand, 1 414 in Singapore (since December 31, 2017) and 61 in Japan. One local case has been recorded to date in Taiwan in 2018. In the Americas, the latest figures indicate that 126 024 and 12 921 cases have been filed in Brazil and Mexico respectively in 2018.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

To reduce the risk of infections spread by mosquitoes, apart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from affected areas should apply insect repellent for 14 days (DF) or at least 21 days (Zika virus infection) upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor. DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;

- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public may refer to the CHP's [tips for using insect repellents](#) for details.

[CE commends teachers for teaching excellence](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence Steering Committee:

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (July 6) presented the Award for Teaching Excellence to 12 teachers at the Award Presentation Ceremony of the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence (CEATE) (2017/2018) held at the Central Government Offices. The Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, presented the Certificate of Merit to 26 teachers.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Chairman of the CEATE Steering Committee, Mr Duffy Wong, said, "The awarded teachers are very innovative and they have made strenuous efforts in designing various learning activities to enrich students' learning experience, which successfully stimulated their motivation to learn and enhanced learning and teaching efficiency. The awardees deserve commendation for their exemplary teaching practices."

Mr Wong said that the awarded teachers would join the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence Teachers' Association to move to the next phase of development. He said he believed that they would meet more dedicated teachers through this platform for exchanges and support. Their sharing of exemplary teaching practices would inspire co-workers in the education sector to further raise the standards of learning and teaching.

This year's CEATE covered three themes, namely "Kindergarten Education", "Physical Education Key Learning Area" and "Technology Education Key Learning Area". Assessment of nominations for the CEATE focused on four domains of assessment, namely professional competence, student development,

professionalism and commitment to the community, and school development. A total of 93 nominations were received. Five nominations (comprising 12 teachers) were presented with the Award for Teaching Excellence while 12 nominations (comprising 26 teachers) were presented with the Certificate of Merit. The assessment results are available on the CEATE website (www.ate.gov.hk).

Officiating guests at today's ceremony also included the Permanent Secretary for Education, Mrs Ingrid Yeung; the Chairman of the Quality Education Fund Steering Committee, Dr Gordon Tsui; the Chairman of the Education Commission, Mr Tim Lui; the Chairman of the Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals and Chairman of the High-level Advisory Panel of CEATE (2017/2018), Dr Carrie Willis; the Chairman of the Curriculum Development Council, Professor Tam Kar-yan; the Chairman of the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, Mr Rock Chen; and the Chairman of the CEATE Assessment Working Group (2017/2018), Professor Horace Ip.

Sharing activities on excellent teaching practices of the CEATE (2017/2018) will be rolled out in the coming school year. Details will be announced on the CEATE website shortly.

Nominations for the CEATE (2018/2019) will be accepted from July 9 to October 5. Its themes will cover "English Language Education Key Learning Area", "General Studies" and "Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area". Details will be uploaded to the CEATE website on July 9.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, July 6, 2018 is 102.4 (same as yesterday's index).

Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation (Amendment) Bill 2018 gazetted

The Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation (Amendment) Bill 2018 was gazetted today (July 6).

A Home Affairs Bureau spokesperson said, "The Bill seeks to improve the existing licensing regime, facilitate enforcement actions and enhance

deterrence against unlicensed hotels and guesthouses."

To improve the existing licensing regime, the Bill empowers the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Authority to take into account in the licensing process the relevant restrictive provisions in land documents, local residents' views, and whether the licence applicant is a "fit and proper" person. The Bill also provides for a differentiation between a hotel licence and a guesthouse licence, and empowers the Authority to impose a licence condition on a guesthouse licence to prohibit the use of the word "hotel" in its business name.

To facilitate enforcement actions, the Bill introduces a strict liability offence. If there is evidence which proves that the premises are used as an unlicensed hotel or guesthouse, the owners and tenants of the premises will be held criminally liable, unless they can provide a relevant statutory defence. Moreover, in order to combat unlicensed hotels and guesthouses, the Bill empowers the Authority to apply for a search warrant to allow enforcement officers to break into, with reasonable force when necessary, a suspected unlicensed hotel or guesthouse to inspect or collect evidence.

As regards enhancing deterrence, the Bill empowers the Authority to apply to the court, upon the second conviction within 16 months of operating an unlicensed hotel or guesthouse or the new strict liability offence in respect of the same premises, to issue a closure order for the premises for six months. The maximum penalty will also be increased from a fine of \$200,000 to \$500,000, and imprisonment from two years to three years.

The spokesperson added, "Since the public consultation conducted in 2014, the Government has been engaging relevant stakeholders, and they were generally supportive of improving the existing licensing regime to strengthen the regulation of hotels and guesthouses, and to combat unlicensed hotels and guesthouses."

Upon the commencement of the Bill, existing licensees will have a 12-month transitional period. Specifically, if an existing licence expires within the 12-month transitional period, the licensee can apply for renewal based on the existing requirements for a period not exceeding 12 months. Upon expiry of this first-renewed licence, the licensee will have to meet all new requirements for further renewal of the licence.

The Bill will be introduced into the Legislative Council for first and second readings on July 11.