

[Update on cluster of Respiratory Syncytial Virus cases in Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority.

Regarding an earlier announcement on a cluster of patients infected with Respiratory Syncytial Virus in a male psychogeriatric ward, the spokesperson for Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital made the following update today (November 1):

One more patient, aged 76, in the ward had presented with respiratory symptoms. Appropriate viral tests had been arranged for the patient and the test results were positive for Respiratory Syncytial Virus. The patient concerned is being treated in isolation and is in stable condition.

Limited admission to the ward has been imposed. Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. All other patients in the ward are under close surveillance.

The case has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

[DEVB hosts forum to promote whole-process project cost governance \(with photos\)](#)

The Development Bureau (DEVB) today (November 1) organised the Project Cost Management Forum 2023 to promote the importance of cost management towards a sustainable development of the construction industry.

With the theme "Whole-process Project Cost Governance", the forum focuses on the comprehensive and systematic approach to manage costs associated with a project throughout its entire life cycle, from inception, planning and design, construction to operation and maintenance stages.

Speaking at the forum, the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works), Mr Ricky Lau, said the challenge of high construction costs is not unique to Hong Kong but indeed global. Participants of the forum shared a common goal of tackling this challenge by tapping global wisdom and good practices. Hong

Hong Kong is a great venue for collaboration because of the distinctive advantage of enjoying strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world.

Speakers from government departments and industry entities of Hong Kong, the Mainland, the United Kingdom and Singapore exchanged views and shared experiences regarding the whole-process project cost governance with more than 100 local and overseas industry leaders at the forum.



[Christmas air mail latest dates of posting 2023](#)

Hongkong Post today (November 1) announced the latest dates of posting for this year's Christmas air mail. While the dates are provisional, they are worked out based on the requirements of destination postal administrations and are for reference information only. These dates and services are subject to availability of flights, and may be altered at short notice. The public are advised to post earlier than the dates shown. Members of the public may visit the Hongkong Post web page at www.hongkongpost.hk/en/about_us/whats_new/index.html on the service availability for destinations before posting.

Destinations	Letters and packets	Parcels
Asia		
The Mainland	December 8	December 7
Bangladesh	December 5	November 30
Brunei Darussalam	December 5	*
India	December 1	November 30
Indonesia	December 5	December 1
Iran	December 5	December 4
Japan	December 7	December 5

Korea	December 5	December 4
Lao People's Democratic Republic	December 5	December 1
Malaysia	December 5	December 1
Myanmar	December 4	*
Nepal	December 4	*
Pakistan	December 7	*
Saudi Arabia	December 5	December 4
Singapore	December 1	November 30
Sri Lanka	December 7	*
Taiwan	December 5	December 4
Thailand	December 5	December 4
The Philippines	December 4	December 1
United Arab Emirates	December 5	December 1
Vietnam	December 4	December 1

Other destinations in Asia	December 5	December 4
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Central, South and North America

Argentina	November 30	*
Brazil	November 30	November 20
Canada	December 4	November 28
Chile	November 28	*
Mexico	December 4	November 29
Peru	December 4	December 1
United States	December 5	December 5

Other destinations in Central, South and North America	November 28	November 27
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Europe

Austria	December 5	December 4
Belgium	December 5	December 4
Cyprus	November 20	November 17
Czech Rep.	December 4	November 29
Denmark	December 1	November 30
Estonia	December 5	December 4
Finland	December 5	December 4
France	December 5	December 4

Germany	December 5	December 4
Greece	November 28	November 27
Hungary	December 5	December 4
Iceland	November 30	*
Ireland	December 1	November 27
Italy	December 4	*
Latvia	December 1	November 27
Lithuania	December 4	December 1
Malta	December 4	December 1
Netherlands	December 5	December 4
Norway	December 1	November 30
Poland	November 29	November 28
Portugal	December 4	December 1
Romania	December 5	December 4
Russia	November 24	November 17
Serbia	December 4	December 1
Spain	December 1	December 1
Sweden	December 6	December 4
Switzerland	December 7	December 5
Türkiye	December 5	December 4
United Kingdom	December 7	December 6

Other destinations in Europe	November 28	November 27
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Oceania		
Australia	November 22	December 4
Nauru	November 29	*
New Zealand	November 30	November 29
Papua New Guinea	November 28	*
Solomon Islands	December 4	*

Other destinations in Oceania	November 21	November 20
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Africa		
Egypt	December 5	December 5
Kenya	December 4	*
Mauritius	December 5	November 29
Morocco	December 5	*
South Africa	November 21	*

Other destinations in
Africa

December 5

December 4

Enquiries on the subject can be directed to the Hongkong Post general enquiry hotline at 2921 2222.

* Service is currently under suspension

Provisional statistics of retail sales for September 2023

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released the latest figures on retail sales today (November 1).

The value of total retail sales in September 2023, provisionally estimated at \$31.8 billion, increased by 13.0% compared with the same month in 2022. The revised estimate of the value of total retail sales in August 2023 increased by 13.7% compared with a year earlier. For the first 9 months of 2023 taken together, it was provisionally estimated that the value of total retail sales increased by 18.6% compared with the same period in 2022.

Of the total retail sales value in September 2023, online sales accounted for 11.0%. The value of online retail sales in that month, provisionally estimated at \$3.5 billion, increased by 22.0% compared with the same month in 2022. The revised estimate of online retail sales in August 2023 decreased by 9.5% compared with a year earlier. For the first 9 months of 2023 taken together, it was provisionally estimated that the value of online retail sales decreased by 2.3% compared with the same period in 2022.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, the provisional estimate of the volume of total retail sales in September 2023 increased by 10.1% compared with a year earlier. The revised estimate of the volume of total retail sales in August 2023 increased by 11.0% compared with a year earlier. For the first 9 months of 2023 taken together, the provisional estimate of the total retail sales increased by 16.5% in volume compared with the same period in 2022.

Analysed by broad type of retail outlet in descending order of the provisional estimate of the value of sales and comparing September 2023 with September 2022, the value of sales of jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts increased by 27.3%. This was followed by sales of electrical goods and other consumer durable goods not elsewhere classified (+1.0% in value); food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (+16.5%); other consumer goods not elsewhere classified (+34.1%); wearing apparel (+41.5%); commodities in department stores (+12.2%); medicines and cosmetics (+50.6%); books, newspapers, stationery and gifts (+10.8%); footwear, allied products and

other clothing accessories (+9.8%); Chinese drugs and herbs (+14.0%); and optical shops (+17.4%).

On the other hand, the value of sales of commodities in supermarkets decreased by 1.3% in September 2023 over a year earlier. This was followed by sales of motor vehicles and parts (-25.1% in value); fuels (-19.2%); and furniture and fixtures (-15.1%).

Based on the seasonally adjusted series, the provisional estimate of the value of total retail sales decreased by 3.8% in the third quarter of 2023 compared with the preceding quarter, while the provisional estimate of the volume of total retail sales decreased by 4.2%.

Commentary

A government spokesman said that the value of total retail sales continued to grow visibly in September over a year earlier, thanks to the continued revival of inbound tourism and private consumption.

Looking ahead, the spokesman added that further recovery of visitor arrivals should benefit the retail sector. Continued improvement in household income and the Government's various support initiatives, including the "Night Vibes Hong Kong" Campaign, should also provide support.

Further information

Table 1 presents the revised figures on value index and value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for August 2023 as well as the provisional figures for September 2023. The provisional figures on the value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet as well as the corresponding year-on-year changes for the first 9 months of 2023 taken together are also shown.

Table 2 presents the revised figures on value of online retail sales for August 2023 as well as the provisional figures for September 2023. The provisional figures on year-on-year changes for the first 9 months of 2023 taken together are also shown.

Table 3 presents the revised figures on volume index of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for August 2023 as well as the provisional figures for September 2023. The provisional figures on year-on-year changes for the first 9 months of 2023 taken together are also shown.

Table 4 shows the movements of the value and volume of total retail sales in terms of the year-on-year rate of change for a month compared with the same month in the preceding year based on the original series, and in terms of the rate of change for a three-month period compared with the preceding three-month period based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The classification of retail establishments follows the Hong Kong

Standard Industrial Classification (HSIC) Version 2.0, which is used in various economic surveys for classifying economic units into different industry classes.

These retail sales statistics measure the sales receipts in respect of goods sold by local retail establishments and are primarily intended for gauging the short-term business performance of the local retail sector. Data on retail sales are collected from local retail establishments through the Monthly Survey of Retail Sales (MRS). Local retail establishments with and without physical shops are covered in MRS and their sales, both through conventional shops and online channels, are included in the retail sales statistics.

The retail sales statistics cover consumer spending on goods but not on services (such as those on housing, catering, medical care and health services, transport and communication, financial services, education and entertainment) which account for over 50% of the overall consumer spending. Moreover, they include spending on goods in Hong Kong by visitors but exclude spending outside Hong Kong by Hong Kong residents. Hence they should not be regarded as indicators for measuring overall consumer spending.

Users interested in the trend of overall consumer spending should refer to the data series of private consumption expenditure (PCE), which is a major component of the Gross Domestic Product published at quarterly intervals. Compiled from a wide range of data sources, PCE covers consumer spending on both goods (including goods purchased from all channels) and services by Hong Kong residents whether locally or abroad. Please refer to the C&SD publication "Gross Domestic Product (Quarterly)" for more details.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Report on Monthly Survey of Retail Sales". Users can browse and download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1080003&scode=530).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Distribution Services Statistics Section of C&SD (Tel: 3903 7400; email: mrs@censtatd.gov.hk).

[Cantonese opera virtuoso Yuen Siu-fai collaborates with theatre master Tang Shu-wing to present cross-boundary](#)

work "The Old Man and His Sea" (with photos)

Yuen Siu-fai and Tang Shu-wing, who are esteemed in their respective fields of Cantonese opera and theatre, will present the groundbreaking collaboration of "The Old Man and His Sea", a cross-boundary production adapted from Nobel laureate Ernest Hemingway's classic "The Old Man and the Sea", fusing contemporary theatre with Chinese opera. The programme, which is part of the New Vision Arts Festival (NVAF), will be staged from November 10 to 12 at the Kwai Tsing Theatre Auditorium.

Crowning seven decades in Cantonese opera, virtuoso Yuen realises his life-long dream to adapt Hemingway's masterpiece, writing a new libretto for the novel and playing the title role in costumes of Cantonese opera and present times. Audiences can appreciate Yuen's artistic finesse and prowess as well as his interaction with young actress Cassandra Tang. "The Old Man and His Sea" has a stripped-down stage setting, showing the abstract minimalist aesthetics of the Chinese opera tradition while emphasising the essence of Chinese classical arts.

Theatre master Tang and Yuen are long-time friends. After tracing the roots of theatre in both East and West, Tang combines physical theatre, Chinese opera, abstract expressionism, stream-of-consciousness monologues, installation art and stage technology into an amalgamated whole, and directs the programme which envelops a play within a play.

"The Old Man and His Sea" is a story traversing time and space. It tells of a young woman who receives a gift from her estranged grandfather after his passing. She discovers that her grandfather wanted to adapt the classic "The Old Man and the Sea" into a Cantonese opera when he was young but never had the chance. So she tries to fulfil his lifelong dream.

"The Old Man and His Sea" will be held at 8pm on November 10 and 11 (Friday and Saturday), and at 3pm on November 12 (Sunday) at the Kwai Tsing Theatre Auditorium. Tickets priced at \$200, \$280, \$380 and \$460 are now available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone bookings, please call 3166 1288, or use the mobile ticketing app "URBTIX". Various discount schemes, including the newly introduced weekend package booking discount, are being offered.

"The Old Man and His Sea" is performed in Cantonese with Chinese and English surtitles. A meet-the-artist session will be held after each performance at the Auditorium.

Organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the NVAF is running from October 20 to November 19, showcasing an array of interdisciplinary programmes by overseas and local performing groups and artists. For programme enquiries, please call 2370 1044 or visit

www.nvaf.gov.hk

