

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 is 106.3 (down 0.3 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, October 21, 2023 was 106.6 (down 0.1 against last Friday's index).

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 October 20 to noon today (October 24), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 316 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category, in the past four days (including last Saturday, Sunday and Monday). 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 10 055 samples of food imported from Japan (including 6 641 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 3 008 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Lifesaving services suspended at Clear Water Bay Second Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (October 24) that due to an insufficient number of lifeguards on duty, the lifesaving services at Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District is suspended today.

First aid service will be maintained at the beach.

Appointments to Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Appeal Board

The Government announced today (October 24) that the Financial Secretary, in exercise of the authority under the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Ordinance (Cap. 485) (MPFSO) delegated to him by the Chief Executive, has reappointed Ms Miranda So Man-wah as the Deputy Chairman of the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Appeal Board (MPFSAB). He has also appointed Ms Anita Tsang Wing-ngar and reappointed Ms Ding Chen, Mr Edward Liu Yang, and Miss

Sandy Wong Hang-yea as members of the MPFSAB. The above-mentioned appointments are for a term of two years from October 25, 2023, to October 24, 2025, both dates inclusive.

Welcoming the above appointments, a spokesperson for the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau said, "The MPFSAB is established in accordance with section 35 of the MPFSO to determine appeals against the decisions of the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority (MPFA) as specified in Schedule 6 to the MPFSO. I am confident that the MPFSAB will continue to discharge its statutory functions effectively, in order to enhance the accountability of the MPFA in exercising its regulatory functions."

The spokesperson also expressed gratitude to the outgoing member of the MPFSAB, Mr Dennis Ho Chiu-ping, for the dedicated services during his tenure.

The new membership of the MPFSAB is as follows:

Chairman

Ms Eva Sit Yat-wah, SC

Deputy Chairman

Ms Miranda So Man-wah

Members

Mr Edward Au Chun-hing

Mr Chow Luen-kiu

Ms Ding Chen

Mr Edward Liu Yang

Mr Raymond Ng Ching-fat

Ms Tam Kam-lin

Ms Anita Tsang Wing-ngar

Ms Lily Wong

Miss Sandy Wong Hang-yea

Hospital Authority commences new round of Patient Experience Survey

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) will launch a Patient Experience Survey

(PES) next Monday (October 30) at 26 public hospitals with an aim of better understanding patients' experiences, feelings and feedback in receiving inpatient services for the purpose of continuous service improvement.

The HA has commissioned the Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care of the Chinese University of Hong Kong to conduct the survey, where patients discharged from the selected hospitals will be randomly recruited for a telephone or online interview. The survey will take around six months to complete and will cover important aspects including hospital environment and facilities, hospital staff, patient care and treatment, information on leaving hospital and overall impressions.

Patients' consent would be sought before commencement of the interview and the information will be handled in strict confidence. Participating patients are free to withdraw anytime from the survey in case they change their mind. Moreover, patients will not be asked to provide any personal data.

The HA appeals to patients to participate in the survey. The spokesperson for the HA said, "Service improvement is an integral part of corporate governance. The HA attaches great importance to patients' views on hospital services. To continuously improve service quality, healthcare staff have to understand patients' needs. The views expressed by patients will help the HA shape service directions and plan improvement measures to continuously enhance healthcare service quality in public hospitals."

The first PES on 5 000 discharged inpatients of public hospitals was launched in 2010, and since then, regular patient experience surveys regarding different services have been conducted. To facilitate the ongoing monitoring of patient service quality, the HA will continue to conduct HA-wide inpatient as well as specialist outpatient or specialty-based surveys at regular intervals, so as to discuss services of specific aspects or topics.