

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, June 11, 2024 is 106.4 (up 0.1 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, June 8, 2024 was 106.3 (up 0.3 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 June 7 to noon today (June 11), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 481 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category, in the past four days (including the past Saturday and 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 200 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 58 036 samples of food imported from Japan (including 37 536 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 14 490 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Resumption of airmail services to Israel

Hongkong Post announced today (June 11) that air letter and packet services of Israel will resume from June 12.

Members of the public may visit the webpage of Hongkong Post at www.hongkongpost.hk/en/about_us/whats_new/notices/index_id_1409.html on the service availability for various destinations.

Free use of leisure and cultural facilities on July 1 in celebration of 27th anniversary of establishment of HKSAR

To celebrate the 27th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, members of the public may use most of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)'s fee-charging leisure and cultural facilities for free as individual users on July 1 (Monday). The event aims at encouraging people to participate in various sports and cultural activities and thereby form good habits, as well as sharing the joy of the special occasion.

To allow more time for members of the public to select suitable free sessions and for those who have yet to register with SmartPLAY to proceed with the registration, the LCSD will ensure there is adequate time for the public to register, and the sessions for free use of facilities on July 1 will be allocated through balloting. During anytime between June 12 and 18, members of the public can submit a balloting application via SmartPLAY for booking sessions available for free use on July 1. Each user can submit a total of three balloting choices in one application. Applications submitted can be altered before the closing of the application period at 11.59pm on June 18. The computer balloting results will be announced by June 21. Successful applicants will be notified by the SmartPLAY system and no confirmation is required by the applicants. Members of the public, who have not been allocated with or applied for the balloted free sessions, can book the remaining free sessions, if any, via SmartPLAY on a first-come, first-served basis at a later stage. Each person can only book one free session for July 1 irrespective of the type of leisure facilities, either from balloting or first-come, first-served booking.

The leisure facilities to be available for free use on July 1 include:

- Indoor leisure facilities: badminton courts, tennis courts, basketball courts, netball courts, volleyball courts, squash courts, table tennis tables, American pool tables, billiard tables, sport climbing walls*, bowling greens, golf facilities, fitness rooms*, activity rooms, dance rooms and a cycling track*;
- Outdoor leisure facilities: tennis courts, tennis practice courts, bowling greens, batting cages, sport climbing walls*, archery ranges* and golf facilities (excluding camp facilities, sports grounds and artificial as well as natural turf pitches);
- Public swimming pools (excluding Wan Chai Swimming Pool, and Kowloon Tsai Swimming Pool which is temporarily closed for redevelopment); and
- Craft at water sports centres* (recreational kayaks, pedal-driven boats, sampans and colour boats at Chong Hing Water Sports Centre are available for free use by campers only).

* Citizens who book these types of facilities must hold the relevant qualification certificates. For details, please visit the thematic website at www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/freeuseday/conditions.html.

No prior booking is required for public swimming pool facilities. Members of the public may line up at the entrances of swimming pools before the start of a session. Free admission is offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

The LCSD appeals to hirers to arrive on time and make the best use of the booked facilities. If a hirer fails to take up a booked session 10 minutes after the starting time, the facility will immediately be reallocated to walk-in participants on a first-come, first-served basis. The facility shall be used for the same purpose as that for which it had been booked by the original hirer. The user shall surrender the facility to the original hirer immediately upon the latter's arrival.

All users of the leisure facilities shall observe the Conditions of Use of LCSD Recreation and Sports Facilities (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/condition/index.html), including the no-show/not present during the use of the booked sessions ("not present") penalty. An individual hirer who is unable to take up a booked session should cancel the booked facility one day before the start of the booked session(s) through the SmartPLAY system. A no-show/"not present" record will be filed on the hirer when he or she fails to take up a session as booked without on-time completion of the cancellation procedure, or is not present during the use of the booked sessions. Any two such records within 60 consecutive days will result in suspension of booking rights for any of the LCSD's recreation and sports facilities for 90 days.

Please call 2414 5555 for enquiry or visit the thematic website at www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/freeuseday/index.html.

For cultural services, free admission will be offered to the fee-charging permanent exhibitions of the Hong Kong Science Museum and the Hong Kong Space Museum (except for the Space Theatre's shows) as well as special exhibition "The Hong Kong Jockey Club Series: Fragrance of Time – In Search of Chinese Art of Scent" at the Hong Kong Museum of Art on July 1.

Admission to a range of delightful exhibitions will continue to be free at the Hong Kong Museum of Art, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, the Hong Kong Museum of History, the Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware, the Hong Kong Railway Museum, the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence, the Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery, the Law Uk Folk Museum, the Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum, the Sheung Yiu Folk Museum, the Hong Kong Film Archive, the Sam Tung Uk Museum, the Oil Street Art Space (Oi!) and the Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre that day. Members of the public are welcome to visit to share the joy on this special occasion. (Note: The Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum is closed temporarily from May 1 for upgrading the permanent exhibition galleries to enhance the design and presentation, as well as for maintenance and renovation works. It is expected to reopen in the second quarter of 2025.)

[Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo \(with video\)](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (June 11):

Reporter: Good morning Mr Lee. Just to follow up on your question on Lord Sumption's comment. In particular, he and Lord Collins in 2012 said that continued participation would be in the interest of the people in Hong Kong. Besides the reasons you just mentioned, you cited Lord Collins as saying Hong

Kong's political situation as part of the reason of his resignation. So what has changed in the two years? Do the three foreign judges' resignations pose a challenge to Hong Kong in its recruitment of foreign overseas judges to sit on the Court of Final Appeal? Does this undermine confidence in Hong Kong's common law system? The second question to follow up on the conflict between the University of Hong Kong's Council and its Vice-Chancellor Zhang Xiang, has this saga already impacted the reputation of University of Hong Kong and how does the Government plan to mitigate the situation? Thank you.

Chief Executive: Well, Hong Kong has become safer, more stable, and that will help business to make good decision because of the certainty and the security that Hong Kong is now enjoying. The Hong Kong Government has issued a very long and detailed statement to indicate our disagreement with Lord Sumption's article. What I would like to add is judges' professional expertise is on law, based on his legal knowledge and experience. Judges' professional expertise is not on politics. A judge is entitled to his personal political preferences. But that is not a judge's area of professional expertise. A judge can like a particular system or dislike it. He may also like a particular law or not, but his professional duty is to interpret and apply that particular piece of law in accordance with legal principles and evidence, whether he likes that law or not; not from his political stance.

In 2021, Lord Sumption refused to take part in a political boycott orchestrated in the UK (United Kingdom), and he said then, that people should not confuse rule of law with democracy. He said there was no democracy during the British rule in Hong Kong. But he said the rule of law was maintained at that time by judges deciding on cases according to the law and evidence. Democracy and rule of law should not be confused. His latest statement indicates that he does not like the political situation in Hong Kong. But this is exactly the area he has told us in 2021 that should not be confused with the rule of law. His recent statement looks to me to be contradictory to his previous stance in this regard. Indeed, people who try to damage the rule of law in Hong Kong, are among those in the UK, in the UK Government, the UK politicians and some anti-China, anti-Hong Kong media. They openly threatened to impose sanction on judges before, during and after the trials. These are blatant attempts to attack the rule of law in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has never, and will not, interfere or attempt to interfere, with judges' conduct of trial. We have not done it and we will not do it. Non-interference of the judicial process is the DNA of Hong Kong's rule of law.

There were three judges who have indicated their wishes to leave. Other than Lord Sumption, Judge Collins resigned but he said he continues to have the fullest confidence in the Court and the total independence of its members. Judge McLachlin has said that she will retire from the job because of her age when her term expires. Yet she expressed her confidence in the members of the Court, their independence and their determination to uphold the rule of law.

This is a time when I feel so proud of our judges. They do their job professionally, according to their judicial oath, without fear and will

uphold justice using their legal knowledge and experience, and adjudicate cases based on evidence and legal principles. They have been standing up to threats and despicable interferences from overseas that try to pressure them. I respect each and every one of them for their courage and their determination to uphold the rule of law in Hong Kong. Some UK officials and politicians try to weaponise the UK judicial influence to target China and the Hong Kong SAR. We should not allow it to happen. We shall protect judges all round from these undue interferences. Our judges need to be supported by all of us for their courage, their determination for upholding the rule of law at a time of open interferences from a number of countries using threats and different kinds of pressure. It is sad and disappointing that our judges are abandoned by a few of their overseas counterparts and have been so unfairly treated by somebody with whom our judges used to serve our judicial system together. But the whole of Hong Kong will support them. We shall support without reservation our courageous, upright and professional judges of Hong Kong, for upholding the rule of law.

Regarding your second question about the University of Hong Kong (HKU), I have to make a clear point that first of all, HKU does not belong to any single person. It does not belong to the Vice-Chancellor. It does not belong to any individual of its Council. HKU belongs to all Hong Kong people. Hong Kong people love it. Students love it. The teaching staff love it. A lot of overseas scholars, youths love it. In all matters, we must take the interest of HKU as the overriding principle. Universities need to seek continuous improvement. If HKU has problems with administration, then it should be improved. If there are important vacancies that have been left long vacant, then they have to be filled up. If there are procedures that are unclear, then we need to write out clearer procedures. If there are issues with the finances, then we have to ensure that there will be clear accountability and responsibility. The Government makes provisions to help universities to go about their businesses. In terms of every year, the provision of public money is over billion dollars. Public money must be spent with good value. The governance of a university, and also the administration, have to be compatible and to conform with the requirements of the agreement that is signed when this provision of money is given. There is a responsibility for the university to fulfil those obligations.

I have met the Vice-Chancellor and also the Chairman of the Council. I tried to co-ordinate their communication and I have also reminded them that good communication and co-operation are important, and for the government provision of public money for universities to go about their business, the government has standards and demands. I also reminded them to take the interest of the university as the overriding principle in all their business. I have already asked the Education Bureau to understand this matter. They will report to me today. I will be meeting them again to listen to the most updated report. I shall then make my decision and it will be announced. Thank you very much.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)