

CHP announces one new confirmed melioidosis infection case over past week

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 13) said that one new confirmed melioidosis infection case had been recorded in the past week (December 6 to 12).

The case involves a 63-year-old male with underlying illnesses who lived in Sham Shui Po. He attended Caritas Medical Centre after developing fever and shortness of breath on November 30 and was admitted on the same day. His clinical sample was confirmed positive for *Burkholderia pseudomallei* upon testing. The patient died of his underlying illness on December 4.

The CHP is investigating the infection source of the case. Epidemiological investigations are ongoing. So far, 23 melioidosis infection cases have been recorded in Hong Kong this year. In 2023, 17 melioidosis infection cases were recorded.

A spokesman for the CHP stressed that person-to-person transmission and animal-to-human transmission are rare, but melioidosis bacteria can survive in the local environment. Melioidosis is an endemic disease in Hong Kong and melioidosis cases have been recorded in Hong Kong each year.

According to literature, infection cases are more common after typhoons or storms. The bacterium *Burkholderia pseudomallei* of melioidosis in soil and muddy water may become exposed to the ground after typhoons or storms, and the bacteria could spread more easily with strong winds or storms. As such, the number of melioidosis cases may increase.

With this in mind, the spokesman reminded members of the public that, where practicable, people should stay indoors during typhoons and storms, avoid travelling to areas with potential flooding, and do not wade in or have contact with muddy water and soil. In addition, high-risk individuals should avoid paths near stormwater drains where aerosols may be generated from contaminated water.

Members of the public should also take the following preventive measures against infection:

- Avoid contact with contaminated soil;
- Wear appropriate protective clothing or footwear when participating in activities with possible contact with soil or water, e.g. using gloves and wearing boots. High-risk individuals may also consider wearing a surgical mask;
- Wash or shower after exposure to contaminated water or soil;
- Always clean any wounds as soon as possible and cover any cuts or grazes

with waterproof dressings;

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water after handling soil or gardening;
- Observe food hygiene and avoid drinking raw water; and
- Travellers can contract the disease through outdoor water sports. Risk of infection can be minimised by avoiding exposure to water sources (such as rivers, ponds or lakes) that might be contaminated.

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â€‹The CHP appealed to members of the public to seek medical advice if they develop symptoms, in particular people with diabetes or other immunocompromised conditions, in order to receive an appropriate medical diagnosis and treatment. For more information on melioidosis, please visit the website of the CHP

at www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/24/101110.html.

[Tripartite meeting further enhances co-operation and exchanges on prevention and control of communicable diseases \(with photos\)](#)

The 21st Tripartite Meeting on Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases was held in Dongguan today (December 13). â€‹Representatives from the health authorities of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao had in-depth exchanges and discussions on three major agenda items, namely prevention and control of major communicable diseases and Dengue Fever; prevention and management of communicable diseases in healthcare institutions; and prevention and control of viral hepatitis and HIV infection. Representatives from the three places also conducted reviews on other areas covering public health emergency response, communicable disease surveillance and control, and notification, etc.

The tripartite meeting was chaired by the Director-General of the Guangdong Provincial Health Commission, Dr Liu Liqun; the Deputy Director-General of the Guangdong Provincial Health Commission and Director of the Guangdong Provincial Disease Control and Prevention Administration, Dr Song Tie; the Director of Health of Hong Kong, Dr Ronald Lam; and the Director of the Health Bureau of Macao, Dr Lo Iek-long.

During the meeting, Dr Lam pointed out that since the signing of the tripartite co-operation agreement on public health emergencies in 2006, the three places have established a highly effective communication mechanism and achieved fruitful results in areas such as communicable disease prevention and control, emergency response, and joint disease prevention and control. It

is hoped that the three places, following the establishment of the Guangdong Provincial Disease Control and Prevention Administration, will further strengthen collaboration in the future, especially reinforcing areas such as communicable disease surveillance and forecasting, and risk assessment and notification mechanisms in order to attain higher efficiency in disease prevention and control for the three places.

A consensus was reached among the three places with regard to the following areas:

1. Further strengthen tripartite collaboration in the prevention and control of communicable diseases and the management of public health emergencies, continue to organise regular tripartite meetings and actively promote the sharing of information and experiences in the three places in order to enhance the level of communicable disease prevention and emergency response capabilities;
2. Continue to implement the tripartite co-operation agreement on public health emergencies to strengthen exchanges and collaboration, optimise the system for handling public health emergencies and major communicable diseases, and further improve public health in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area;
3. Further strengthen scientific research and exchanges in various fields of communicable diseases, including the joint development of more effective surveillance and forecasting methods, conducting research on epidemiology and applied science, and fostering the exchange of new technologies and information sharing;
4. Further improve notification mechanisms for communicable diseases, and through discussion and consultation, standardise terms that are commonly used in epidemiology of major communicable diseases;
5. Carry out joint consultation and assessment of communicable disease risks to address communicable disease epidemics, major events affecting the three places, as well as infectious diseases with peak seasons and emerging infections as appropriate to develop prevention and control strategies to mitigate risks;
6. Conduct joint emergency response exercises among the three places to enhance practical skills;
7. Promote exchanges and trainings of professional staff and strengthen experience sharing in epidemic prevention and control as well as clinical management; and
8. Strengthen co-ordination and collaboration in provision of medical support for major events.

Dr Lam stated that with the continuous deepening efforts in the joint prevention and control of communicable diseases, the three places will

further enhance their abilities to respond to epidemics.

Around 60 representatives from the three places attended the meeting today, including those from the Hospital Authority of Hong Kong. The next Tripartite Meeting on Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases, to be hosted by the Department of Health, will take place in Hong Kong.



[Hong Kong's Gross National Income and external primary income flows for the third quarter of 2024](#)

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (December 13) the preliminary statistics on Hong Kong's Gross National Income (GNI) and related figures for the third quarter of 2024.

Hong Kong's GNI, which denotes the total income earned by Hong Kong residents from engaging in various economic activities, increased by 4.2% in the third quarter of 2024 over a year earlier to \$899.6 billion at current market prices. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP), estimated at \$812.3 billion at current market prices in the same quarter, recorded a 6.1% increase over a year earlier. The value of GNI was larger than GDP by \$87.2 billion in the

third quarter of 2024, which was equivalent to 10.7% of GDP in that quarter, mainly attributable to a net inflow of investment income.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, Hong Kong's GNI increased by 1.9% in real terms in the third quarter of 2024 over a year earlier. The corresponding GDP in the same quarter increased by 1.8% in real terms.

Hong Kong's total inflow of primary income, which mainly comprises investment income, estimated at \$616.1 billion in the third quarter of 2024 and equivalent to 75.8% of GDP in that quarter, recorded a significant increase of 10.3% over a year earlier. Meanwhile, total primary income outflow, estimated at \$528.9 billion in the third quarter of 2024 and equivalent to 65.1% of GDP in that quarter, also increased significantly by 14.7% over a year earlier.

As for the major components of investment income inflow, direct investment income (DII) increased significantly by 13.5% over a year earlier, mainly due to the increase in earnings of some prominent local enterprises from their direct investment abroad. Portfolio investment income (PII) recorded an increase of 8.4% over a year earlier, mainly attributable to the increase in interest income received by resident investors from their holdings of non-resident debt securities.

Regarding the major components of investment income outflow, DII increased significantly by 17.4% over a year earlier, mainly due to the increase in earnings of some prominent multinational enterprises from their direct investment in Hong Kong. PII increased significantly by 11.1%, mainly attributable to the increase in dividend payout to non-resident investors from their holdings of resident equity securities.

Analysed by country/territory, the mainland of China continued to be the largest source of Hong Kong's total primary income inflow in the third quarter of 2024, accounting for 40.3%. This was followed by the British Virgin Islands (BVI), with a share of 16.5%. Regarding total primary income outflow, the mainland of China and the BVI remained the most important destinations in the third quarter of 2024, accounting for 33.2% and 20.0% respectively.

Further Information

GDP and GNI are closely related indicators for measuring economic performance. GDP is a measure of the total value of production of all resident producing units of an economy. GNI denotes the total income earned by residents of an economy from engaging in various economic activities, irrespective of whether the economic activities are carried out within the economic territory of the economy or outside.

Figures of GNI and primary income flows analysed by income component from the fourth quarter of 2022 to the third quarter of 2024 are presented in Table A, while selected major country/territory breakdowns of primary income

inflow and outflow for the same quarters are presented in Tables B(1) and B(2) respectively.

Statistics on GDP and GNI from 2022 onwards and primary income flows for 2024 are subject to revision when more data are incorporated. In the light of the latest information available, annual and quarterly figures of GNI and external primary income flows for 2023 have been revised, such that the corresponding figures presented in Tables A and B are revised figures.

More detailed statistics are given in the report "Gross National Income and External Primary Income Flows, Third Quarter 2024". Users can browse and download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1040005&scode=250).

For enquiries about GNI and related statistics, please contact the Balance of Payments Branch (2) of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7054 or email: gni@censtatd.gov.hk).

[Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund](#)

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

â€‹The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) released today (December 13) the key analytical accounts of the Exchange Fund at the end of November 2024.

Foreign assets, representing the external assets of the Exchange Fund, increased during the month by HK\$30.8 billion to HK\$3,506.4 billion.

The Monetary Base, comprising Certificates of Indebtedness, Governmentâ€™issued currency notes and coins in circulation, the balance of the banking system and Exchange Fund Bills and Notes issued, amounted to HK\$1,950.1 billion.

Claims on the private sector in Hong Kong amounted to HK\$287.8 billion.

Foreign liabilities amounted to HK\$28.0 billion.

The analytical accounts of the Exchange Fund are released in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) and are referred to as the Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank under SDDS (Annex).

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 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 December 2024, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

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

[SIE Fund launches "Smart Silver" Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders \(with photos\)](#)

The Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) officially launched its "Smart Silver" Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders today (December 13) at Lok Fu Place, starting a new chapter in the pursuit of digital inclusion for the elderly. Among the guests were 75 elderly volunteers who joined others to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government announced in the 2024-25 Budget that the SIE Fund would allocate \$100 million to provide elderly people aged 60 or above with digital training courses and technical support in the coming three years. Following an open invitation for proposals and evaluation, the SIE Fund has appointed 12 non-governmental organisations and is providing them with funding support to take forward the "Smart Silver" Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders (the Programme) across all 18 districts. Under the Programme, the appointed organisations will set up community-based help desks at suitable locations to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support for elderly people aged 60 or above, particularly singleton or doubleton elders living in old districts and public housing. It covers topics such as smartphone operation know-how, the use of digital government services (e.g. "iAM Smart" and other common government mobile applications) and

cybersecurity. The Programme is expected to benefit more than 100 000 elders. For details about the Programme and service hours of the help desks, please visit www.it2.gov.hk/smart_silver/.

Officiating at the launching ceremony, the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, said "The Government has been working vigorously to promote digital inclusion. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has introduced a series of initiatives to encourage elderly people to learn and use technologies." He stated that all initiatives have been well received and that the Government will continue to press ahead with its work to help more elders.

The Chairperson of the SIE Fund Task Force, Mr Kevin Orr, invited all parties to pitch in. He said, "Digital technology has become an integral part of everyday lives while the SIE Fund has been actively promoting digital inclusion. Through cross-sector collaboration, a caring society with digital inclusion can be built where elderly people can explore the digital world on their own and enjoy active ageing."

The prize presentation ceremony of the Elderly IT Stars Recognition Scheme was also held today. Thirteen "Elderly IT Stars" were presented with awards from the Commissioner for Digital Policy, Mr Tony Wong. All awardees were outstanding participants of either the ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly or the Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly organised by the DPO. The Recognition Scheme aims at recognising elderly persons who have made use of digital technologies to demonstrate their commitment to improve their quality of life, bringing a positive impact to their friends and the community, and promoting a sense of worthiness among elders.

The organiser is promoting the Government's digital inclusion initiatives for elders with game booths set up at Lok Fu Place for two consecutive days (December 13 and 14), and introducing related services through information booths. The "iAM Smart" mobile registration team will also help members of the public register for "iAM Smart+" to enjoy the convenience of one-stop e-government services.

The SIE Fund was inaugurated in 2013 and is overseen by the SIE Fund Task Force under the Commission on Poverty. The Task Force Secretariat is established in the DPO under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau. The SIE Fund acts as a catalyst for social innovation in Hong Kong. By facilitating social innovation and cultivating social entrepreneurship, the Fund aims to make an impact in alleviating poverty and social exclusion, promoting social integration, and enhancing the well-being and cohesion of society.

