

SJ explores co-operation on dispute avoidance and resolution services with Mainland (with photos)

The Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC, started her visit in Beijing today (July 18) by meeting with representatives from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Supreme People's Court to promote Hong Kong's legal as well as dispute avoidance and resolution services. She also exchanged views with Mainland counterparts on the latest development of the related issues internationally and in the Mainland (including the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area). She said she was pleased to learn that the Central Government supports Hong Kong as a centre for arbitration and mediation in the Asia-Pacific region.

In the morning, Ms Cheng met with the Vice Minister of Justice, Mr Xiong Xuanguo, to explore opportunities for further bilateral collaboration in respect of legal services under the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement and the Greater Bay Area. She then met with the Director-General of the Department of Treaty and Law of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Jia Guide. They exchanged views on the dispute avoidance and resolution services under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Ms Cheng called on the Vice-president of the Supreme People's Court, Mr Yang Wanming, followed by a visit to the Beijing Internet Court and the Beijing Intellectual Property Court in the afternoon, to have a better understanding of the use of modern technology to resolve disputes. Both sides exchanged views on the development of dispute avoidance and resolution services in the Greater Bay Area.

Accompanying Ms Cheng on the visit included the Commissioner of the Inclusive Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Office and government counsel from the Civil Division, the Legal Policy Division and the International Law Division of the Department of Justice.

Ms Cheng will attend the second Belt and Road Joint Conference with other government officials and representatives tomorrow (July 19), to discuss matters relating to Hong Kong's participation in and contribution to the Belt and Road Initiative.

Ms Cheng will return to Hong Kong in the morning on July 20.



Assessment and verification reports on Hung Hom Station under Shatin to Central Link project

A spokesman for the Transport and Housing Bureau said that the Government had scrutinised and accepted the holistic assessment report on the Hung Hom Station Extension under the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project, as well as the verification study report on as-constructed conditions of the North Approach Tunnels, South Approach Tunnels and Hung Hom Stabling Sidings, which were submitted by the MTR Corporation Limited.

The two reports have been submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the Construction Works at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension under the Shatin to Central Link Project today (July 18), and are now available at the Highways Department's web page for the SCL project (www.hyd.gov.hk/en/road_and_railway/railway_projects/scl/index.html) for reference by the public.

[Opening remarks by STH at media session \(with video\)](#)

Following are the opening remarks by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, at a media session on the Shatin to Central Link project this afternoon (July 18):

MTRCL (MTR Corporation Limited) submitted two final reports relating to the Hung Hom Station Extension incident to the Government today. Both reports have been accepted by the Government and submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the Construction Works at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension under the Shatin to Central Link Project.

MTRCL recommended in the reports a series of works and measures at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension in order to satisfy the relevant codes of practice and contract requirements. There will be long-term monitoring of the structure upon completion of the works tentatively in late 2020 or early 2021.

Taking into account the testing and trial run, the Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section can only be fully commissioned before the end of 2021. The Government considers it necessary to partially commission the Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section so that the public can enjoy the benefits of the new railway soonest. The Government accepted the arrangement recommended by MTRCL, which involves the commissioning of three new stations, namely Hin Keng Station, Diamond Hill Station Extension and Kai Tak Station. The section from Wu Kai Sha Station to Kai Tak Station is now officially named as Tuen Ma Line Phase 1, which is targeted for commissioning in the first quarter of 2020.

MTRCL will pay the costs associated with the Hung Hom Station Extension incident, including those relating to partial commissioning. The estimated costs are about \$2 billion. As for the total costs for the entire SCL project, the Government will seriously follow up with MTRCL with a view to coming up with a comprehensive solution.

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illegally imported live birds \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs today (July 18) seized 123 suspected illegally imported live birds with an estimated market value of about \$300 at Lo Wu Control Point.

During Customs clearance for a 23-year-old incoming male passenger this afternoon, the batch of live birds was found in four bird cages inside two plastic bags he carried.

The case was handed over to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department for a follow-up investigation.

Under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Regulations, it is an offence to import any bird unless it is accompanied by a valid health certificate. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$25,000.

Members of the public may report any suspected activities of illegal importing of live birds to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected](#)

illicit cigarettes (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (July 17) detected two illicit cigarettes cases involving wheelchairs and seized about 15 000 suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$40,000 and a duty potential of about \$28,000 at Lo Wu Control Point.

Customs officers intercepted an incoming male passenger on a wheelchair and a female passenger accompanying him yesterday. About 14 000 suspected illicit cigarettes were found in the handbags carried by them and rucksacks hung on the wheelchair. On the same day, Customs officers intercepted another incoming male passenger on a wheelchair and found about 1 000 suspected illicit cigarettes in his handbag.

The three persons were arrested for failing to declare dutiable cigarettes in excess of duty-free concessions to a Customs Officer.

The arrested persons are aged between 64 and 79. An investigation is ongoing.

Customs officers will stay vigilant on this smuggling modus operandi. Customs reminds members of the public that under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, and selling or buying illicit cigarettes commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may report any suspected illicit cigarette activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

