

# Thirty-four immigration offenders arrested

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a series of territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations, including an operation codenamed "Twilight," and joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion", from September 3 to 6. A total of 25 illegal workers and nine suspected employers were arrested.

During operation "Twilight", ImmD Task Force officers raided 36 target locations including restaurants, residential flats under renovation, village houses, residential buildings, a commercial building, a shopping mall, a massage parlor, a hotel and garbage collection depots. Eighteen illegal workers and eight employers were arrested. The illegal workers comprised 11 men and seven women, aged 25 to 59. Among them, three men and three women were suspected of using and being in possession of forged Hong Kong identity cards or identity cards relating to other person. Meanwhile, five men and three women, aged 29 to 60, were suspected of employing the illegal workers.

Furthermore, during operation "Champion", enforcement officers raided nine target locations in Tsing Yi, Sha Tin and Kwai Chung districts, including a car park, an industrial building, a residential building and restaurants. Seven illegal workers and an employer were arrested. The illegal workers comprised five men and two women, aged 24 to 53. Among them, four men were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. Meanwhile, a man, aged 31, was suspected of employing the illegal workers.

"Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties," an ImmD spokesman said.

The spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases. It is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD, as a standard procedure, will conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

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## [Two illegal workers jailed](#)

Two illegal workers, comprising a Pakistani and a Bangladeshi, were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (September 6).

Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators received a referral from the Hong Kong Police Force to further investigate an illegal employment case in June. Enforcement officers arrested a male Pakistani illegal worker and a male Bangladeshi illegal worker, aged 32 and 40, dismantling electronic devices in Pat Heung. Upon identity checking, they produced for inspection recognisance forms issued by the ImmD, which prohibit them from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that they were non-refoulement claimants. An employer suspected of employing the illegal workers was arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The two illegal workers arrested were each charged at Shatin

Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. They pleaded guilty to the charges and were sentenced to imprisonment for 16 months' and 15 months' respectively.

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## “Critics’ Choice” film series to feature railway journeys (with photos)

Not only a means of transport, the train has long been a location for filmmaking with many movie scenes set above the two rails. For "Critics' Choice 2018 – From Rails to Reels", film critics Lam Kee-to, Stephanie Ng, Ernest Chan, Lam Kam-po, Thomas Shin and Joyce Yang have selected six train movies, taking film buffs on a big-screen rail journey.

The series is presented by the Film Programmes Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department in collaboration with the Hong Kong Arts Centre and organised by the Hong Kong Film Critics Society. Films will be screened from October 7 to December 30 at the Lecture Hall of the Hong Kong Science Museum and the Louis Koo Cinema of the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

In addition, post-screening seminars will be arranged for all the screenings with free admission, and will be hosted by the six aforementioned film critics and guests, namely Tong Ching-siu, Winnie Fu, Lau Yam, Cheng Chuen-wai, John Chong and Gina Marchetti.

Critic Lam Kee-to wrote on Yoji Yamada's "Where Spring Comes Late" (1970), "Railroad as the path to happiness and family bliss. Witness the rejuvenating power of classic cinema." A classic work of the Japanese shomin-geki, a genre focused on common people, the film follows a family from Kyushu travelling by train across Japan to start a new life in Hokkaido. Regarded as a norm-setting film of the railroad genre, the film reflects the changing economy and way of life in Japan during the 1970s while featuring the Japanese train culture and presenting snapshots of various parts of Japan. The film won the No. 1 Film Award of the Kinema Junpo Top 10 in 1971.

On Lars von Trier's "Europa" (1991), critic Stephanie Ng wrote, "Memory or nightmare? Myth or history? A dark and mystic take on post-war Germany." In the film, an American young man gets on a train to Germany and makes the acquaintance of a mystery girl. They are then sucked into a whirlpool when the Allies are extensively hunting for members of the defeated Nazis, turning the train into a stage where desire, power and revenge play out. The story is full of mysteries with the blending of expressionism, film noir and existentialism. The film won the Jury Prize, Best Artistic Contribution and the Technical Grand Prize at the Cannes Film Festival 1991.

Critic Ernest Chan described "Trans-Europ-Express" (1966), an anomaly of the train film by French novelist and filmmaker Alain Robbe-Grillet, as follows: "A deconstruction, deboning, digestion and reconstruction of the crime film genre. Film as a struggle on the right to narrate." The film depicts a director and a producer conceiving a crime movie on a train, in which the characters created by them appear on the same train simultaneously. The film within a film blurs the boundary between reality and abstract imagination, subverting narrative norms.

Commenting on Andrei Konchalovsky's "Runaway Train" (1985), critic Lam Kam-po said, "Kurosawa's story reworked by a Soviet master. A most daring escape by train through heavy snow." Based on a script originally written by Japanese film master Akira Kurosawa, the film tells of an escape of a prisoner from a maximum security prison and a young prisoner. The duo get on a train to Alaska, but it runs out of control when they are about to be free forever. The film earned the male lead, Jon Voight, Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture – Drama at the Golden Globe Awards in 1986.

Writing on Sidney Lumet's "Murder on the Orient Express" (1974), an adaptation of the detective novel of the same title by Agatha Christie, critic Thomas Shin wrote, "A most gorgeous web of mystery, the unsurpassable locked room mystery." With a star-studded cast including Ingrid Bergman, Albert Finney and Sean Connery, the film follows detective Hercule Poirot, who hops on the Orient Express to London and finds the businessman in the next cabin dead with multiple stab wounds. Poirot then interrogates the 13 suspects onboard to find the murderer. The film earned Ingrid Bergman Best Actress in a Supporting Role at the Academy Awards in 1975.

Critic Joyce Yang wrote of Jiří Menzel's feature film debut "Closely Watched Trains" (1966), a notable work of the Czech new wave, "Adolescent sex frustration caught under train wheels. Menzel's easygoing approach of a heavy subject makes this an unforgettable Czech classic." Set in a small town in the German-occupied Czechoslovakia during World War II, the film features Miloš getting his dream as a train dispatcher who can meet his sweetheart, a train conductor, every day. Miloš, however, starts to realise that crises in adolescence and politics are in fact all around him. The film won Best Foreign Language Film at the Academy Awards in 1968.

All films have Chinese and English subtitles.

Tickets for Science Museum screenings are priced at \$55 and those for Arts Centre screenings are priced at \$65. Tickets are now available at URB TIX ([www.urbtix.hk](http://www.urbtix.hk)). For credit card telephone bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries, please call 2734 2900 or visit [www.lcsd.gov.hk/fp/en\\_US/web/fpo/programmes/ccfrr2018/index.html](http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/fp/en_US/web/fpo/programmes/ccfrr2018/index.html).





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## [Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures Released](#)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (September 7) that the official foreign currency reserve assets of Hong Kong amounted to US\$424.9 billion as at the end of August 2018 (end-July 2018: US\$431.9 billion) (Annex).

Including unsettled foreign exchange contracts, the foreign currency reserve assets of Hong Kong at the end of August

2018 amounted to US\$417.3 billion (end-July 2018: US\$424.3 billion).

The total foreign currency reserve assets of US\$424.9 billion represent about seven times the currency in circulation or 46 per cent of Hong Kong dollar M3.

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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 Special Data Dissemination Standard (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 September 2018, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

September 7	SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
September 14	SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund)
September 28	SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity
September 28	Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account

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## [Professional Services Advancement Support Scheme invites new round of applications](#)

The Professional Services Advancement Support Scheme (PASS) is inviting a new round of applications today (September 7) from non-profit-distributing organisations such as professional bodies, trade or industrial organisations and research institutes.

PASS, with a total allocation of \$200 million, aims at funding non-profit-making industry-led projects for increasing exchanges and co-operation of Hong Kong's professional services with external counterparts, promoting relevant publicity activities, and enhancing the standards of Hong Kong professional services through capacity building programmes.

The maximum grant under PASS for each approved project is \$3 million or 90 per cent of the total eligible project cost, whichever is lower. A wide range of professional services is covered by PASS, including accounting, legal, building and construction, healthcare, information and communications technology, design, and technical testing and analysis. Sector-specific projects and cross-sectoral projects are both welcome.

So far, 25 projects have been funded under PASS, including seminars, forums, workshops, exchange events, exhibitions, and research and studies. Costs directly incurred for implementing a project, such as manpower cost, venue and set up cost, production and promotion cost, and the project team's travel and accommodation cost outside Hong Kong, are typical items funded. More details about PASS and the funded projects are available at [www.pass.gov.hk](http://www.pass.gov.hk).

PASS receives applications all year round and they are processed on a

quarterly basis. The deadline for the upcoming round of applications is November 30.

A briefing session will be held on September 14 for organisations interested in applying for PASS funding. For registration for the briefing session or other enquiries, please contact the PASS Secretariat at 3655 5418 or [pass@cedb.gov.hk](mailto:pass@cedb.gov.hk).