

Sample of soybean curd dessert with sesame sweet soup detected with excessive Bacillus cereus

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 31) announced that a sample of soybean curd dessert with sesame sweet soup was found to contain an excessive amount of Bacillus cereus, a pathogen. The CFS is following up on the case.

"The CFS took the above-mentioned sample from a dessert shop in Wong Tai Sin for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained Bacillus cereus at a level of 220,000 per gram. Under the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, if ready-to-eat food contains Bacillus cereus at a level of more than 100,000 per gram, it is considered unsatisfactory," a CFS spokesman said.

"The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the unsatisfactory result. The vendor has already stopped selling the affected kind of food according to the CFS' advice. The CFS has also provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the staff of the vendor," the spokesman said.

According to Section 54 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132), all food available for sale in Hong Kong, locally produced or imported, should be fit for human consumption. An offender is subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

Bacillus cereus is commonly found in the environment. Unhygienic conditions in food processing and storage may give rise to its growth. Consuming food contaminated with excessive Bacillus cereus may cause gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting and diarrhoea.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident, and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health. Investigation is ongoing.

Statement by Security Bureau

A spokesman for the Security Bureau today (July 31) made the following statement:

The legal representative of the Convenor of the Hong Kong National Party wrote to the Security Bureau last week, requesting an extension of the 21-day deadline for making written representations in accordance with section 8(3)

of the Societies Ordinance. Having considered the matter, the Secretary for Security has decided to extend the period for representation to 49 days. The Hong Kong National Party may make representations to the Secretary for Security on or before September 4. The Security Bureau has informed the legal representative of the Convenor of the Hong Kong National Party of the decision.

Woman fined for illegal club operations

A woman was fined \$4,500 at the Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (July 31) for contravening the Clubs (Safety of Premises) Ordinance.

The courts heard that in February this year, officers from the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) of the Home Affairs Department conducted inspections at a club on Shau Kei Wan Main Street East which had been operating with a certificate of compliance (CoC).

The club was found to have a layout that deviated from the registered drawings and the number of people at the club had exceeded the maximum allowable capacity as stipulated in the CoC. Also, the club's staff failed to show the registered drawings upon the OLA officers' request. Conditions 3, 6 and 17 of the CoC were breached.

The woman, being the CoC holder of the club, was charged with contravening section 21(2) of the Ordinance.

A spokesman for the department reminded all CoC holders to comply with the conditions as stipulated therein. Enforcement action will continue to be taken against illegal club operations.

CS visits Sham Shui Po District

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, today (July 31) visited Sham Shui Po District to keep abreast of development in revitalising historic buildings and providing support for the underprivileged in the district.

Accompanied by the Chairman of the Sham Shui Po District Council (SSPDC), Mr Ambrose Cheung, and the District Officer (Sham Shui Po), Mr Damian Lee, Mr

Cheung visited J Life Foundation Limited (Family Service Center) and its facilities. He was pleased to learn that the centre had all along strived to alleviate the poverty situation of needy children and reduce inter-generational poverty through a wide range of support services for the underprivileged in the district such as food assistance, homework guidance and tutorial services.

Mr Cheung also met with families receiving assistance to understand their livelihood challenges and reassure them that the current-term Government would continue to provide appropriate support to the underprivileged through effective use of public resources and initiatives introduced by the Commission on Poverty and the Community Care Fund.

He then proceeded to Mei Ho House to visit the YHA Mei Ho House Youth Hostel and the Heritage of Mei Ho House Museum.

He said that the revitalised Mei Ho House, comprising a youth hostel and an exhibition under one roof, could help foster cultural exchange, enrich Hong Kong's tourism resources and provide affordable accommodation to tourists.

He expressed special thanks to the Hong Kong Youth Hostels Association for its efforts in strengthening the inclusiveness of the community, passing on local culture and Hong Kong spirit to future generations through the establishment of alumni networks and inviting former residents of Mei Ho House to be docents of the museum.

Mr Cheung then met SSPDC members and carefully listened their views on various development issues and matters of concern to the community.

Manager of unlicensed guesthouse fined

A man was fined \$12,000 at the Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (July 31) for contravening the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance.

The courts heard that in January this year, officers of the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA), the Home Affairs Department, inspected a suspected unlicensed guesthouse on Yiu Wa Street in Causeway Bay. During the inspection, the OLA officers posed as lodgers and successfully rented a room in the guesthouse on a daily basis.

According to the OLA's records, the guesthouse did not possess a licence under the Ordinance on the day of inspection. The man responsible for managing the premise was charged with contravening section 5(1) of the Ordinance.

A department spokesman stressed that operating or managing an unlicensed guesthouse is a criminal offence and will lead to a criminal record. Upon conviction, the offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The spokesman appealed to anyone with information about suspected unlicensed guesthouses to report it to the OLA through the hotline (Tel: 2881 7498), by email (hadlaenq@had.gov.hk), by fax (2504 5805) using the report form downloaded from the OLA website (www.hadla.gov.hk), or through the mobile application "Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses".