

[Tseung Kwan O Hospital appeals to public for missing person](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesman for Tseung Kwan O Hospital (TKOH) made the following public appeal today (August 15) to help locate a missing person:

A 78-year-old elderly woman with dementia, accompanied by a domestic helper, attended follow-up consultation at TKOH Specialist Out-patient Department this afternoon. The elderly was found missing by domestic helper at around 5pm while awaiting drug dispensing in pharmacy. Relatives reported to the police and sought assistance from the hospital.

The elderly woman is about 1.5 metres tall and of thin body build with short hair. According to CCTV footage, she was wearing a yellow white striped T-shirt, black trouser and white shoes when she left the hospital.

The hospital appeals to the public to help locate the elderly woman and contact police if they know her whereabouts.

[DH investigates two cases of solanaceous alkaloid poisoning](#)

The Department of Health (DH) is today (August 15) investigating two cases of solanaceous alkaloid poisoning after consumption of Chinese herbs.

"Upon notification of two cases of solanaceous alkaloid poisoning by the Hospital Authority (HA) yesterday (August 14), the DH commenced investigations immediately," a spokesman for the DH said.

The cases involve two female patients who have consumed broth prepared from Chinese herbs which include a herbal ingredient *Radix Aucklandiae*. Solanaceous alkaloids were detected in both patients' urine and the herbal samples upon laboratory testing by the HA. In the unused herbals from the patients, solanaceous alkaloids were detected in *Radix Aucklandiae* by HA laboratory testing. Preliminary investigation revealed that one herbal ingredient *Radix Aucklandiae* of the same batch (Batch No.: 60532110-1) was suspected to be contaminated with Solanaceous alkaloids.

The first female patient, aged 56, developed symptoms and signs compatible with solanaceous alkaloid poisoning on July 27, including dizziness, limb weakness, confusion, slurred speech, dilated pupils and

tachycardia (abnormally high heart rate), about 30 minutes after consuming a broth prepared from Chinese herbs prescribed for chronic cough by a Chinese Medicine Practitioner (CMP) at The Hong Kong Tuberculosis Association – The University of Hong Kong Chinese Medicine Clinic cum Training and Research Centre (CMCTR) (Wan Chai District). She attended the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital for management on the same day and was discharged on July 31.

Another female patient, aged 63, developed similar symptoms and signs compatible with solanaceous alkaloid poisoning on August 3, including delirium and lower limb weakness about three hours after consuming a broth prepared from Chinese herbs prescribed for dyspepsia by a CMP at the Haven of Hope – The Chinese University of Hong Kong CMCTR (Sai Kung District). She was admitted to the United Christian Hospital on the same day and was discharged on August 5.

"Solanaceous alkaloids cause anticholinergic symptoms including blurred vision, dry mouth, dizziness and confusion. Deaths may result in severe cases," the spokesman added.

According to the Chinese medicine literature, the concerned herbs could not account for the presence of the solanaceous alkaloids detected. The DH's investigations on the distribution of the relevant lot of contaminated herbs are ongoing.

The HA and CMCTRs will contact the patients dispensed with the affected herb in due course and give health advice as appropriate.

Separately, the DH will set up a hotline (2961 8949) which operates from 9am to 5pm starting tomorrow (August 16) for public enquiries related to using the affected herb prescribed by the CMCTRs. As a precaution, members of the public who have Chinese herbs containing *Radix Aucklandiae* dispensed by the two CMCTRs are advised to stop using them and to seek advice from the clinics if necessary. If they feel unwell, they are advised to consult healthcare professionals as soon as possible.

[Hong Kong Customs raids two suspected illicit cigarette storage centres \(with photo\)](#)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs yesterday (August 14) conducted anti-illicit cigarette operations in Yuen Long and raided two suspected illicit cigarette storage centres. A total of about 1.44 million suspected illicit cigarettes with a total estimated market value of about \$5.3 million and a duty potential of about \$3.6 million were seized.

In the first case, Customs officers raided a metal hut in Tai Kei Leng, Yuen Long, last night and seized about 990 000 suspected illicit cigarettes therein. A 34-year-old man suspected to be connected with the case was also arrested.

In the second case, Customs officers on the same night further seized about 450 000 suspected illicit cigarettes inside a metal hut on Kung Um Road, Yuen Long, successfully smashing another suspected illicit cigarette storage centre.

Customs believes that the two metal huts were used as illicit cigarette storage centres by an illicit cigarette syndicate. The syndicate used metal huts in remote and concealed areas as a cover, which was intended to increase the difficulties for law enforcement by Customs. Moreover, the syndicate stored illicit cigarettes in different places in order to diversify the risk and minimise the loss after being detected. An initial investigation revealed that the suspected illicit cigarette storage centres involved in the two cases were mainly used to supply illicit cigarettes to residents in the New Territories.

The arrested man will be charged with "dealing with goods to which the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance applies" and will appear at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (August 16).

Customs will continue to combat illicit cigarette activities at all fronts through a multi-pronged approach.

Customs stresses that it is an offence to buy or sell illicit cigarettes. Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, 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) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).



CHP investigates confirmed Mpox case

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) said today (August 15) that it is investigating a confirmed Mpox (also known as Monkeypox) case, and urged the public to heighten vigilance and avoid close physical contact with persons suspected of contracting Mpox. Meanwhile, high-risk target groups are advised to receive Mpox vaccination.

The case involves a 34-year-old male patient with underlying illness. He had developed skin rash since June. He visited St Teresa's Hospital and Kwong Wah Hospital on August 7 and August 11 respectively due to worsening symptoms. He has been admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital and he is in stable condition.

An initial investigation revealed that he had visited Thailand during the incubation period. According to the patient, he had high-risk exposure during his stay there. No epidemiological linkages between this case and other confirmed cases recorded in Hong Kong earlier have been found so far. The CHP's epidemiological investigations of the case are ongoing, including contact tracing and an infection source investigation. The CHP will report the case to the World Health Organization.

The CHP had earlier set up an Mpox telephone hotline (2125 2373). The hotline operates from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 9am to 5pm, which enables those who suspect or are concerned they have had high-risk contact with confirmed patients, in particular men who have sex with men or those who have sexual practices with strangers, to make enquiries and receive relevant health advice. Meanwhile, the CHP reminds the public, especially those subject to high risks of exposure, to take precautions and avoid close physical contact with persons or animals suspected of infection. They should seek medical attention as soon as possible if they experience relevant symptoms, including rash, fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle pain, and severe headaches.

The CHP reminds members of the public that Mpox is not transmitted through respiratory droplets or aerosols in general, and transmission would not occur through social contact. Proper personal and hand hygiene can help prevent getting infected via contact.

The Government has activated the Alert level of the preparedness and response plan for the disease in September last year and will continue to assess the risk in view of the latest scientific evidence and situation, and implement corresponding control measures.

The Mpox vaccination programme for high-risk groups commenced on October 5 last year. Under the programme, the following high-risk target groups can receive Mpox vaccination on a voluntary basis:

1. Individuals with high-risk sexual practices, e.g. having multiple sexual

- partners, sex workers, or having a history of sexually transmitted infection within the past 12 months;
2. Healthcare workers responsible for caring of patients with confirmed Mpox;
 3. Laboratory personnel working with zoonotic pox viruses; and
 4. Animal care personnel with high risk of exposure in case of Mpox occurrence in animals in Hong Kong.

Currently, high-risk target groups can receive Mpox walk-in vaccinations at any one of the DH's six Social Hygiene Service Clinics (SoCHS) (namely Wan Chai Male SoCHS, Wan Chai Female SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Male SoCHS, Yung Fung Shee SoCHS, Fanling SoCHS and Tuen Mun SoCHS). Further information of the clinics including their locations is available at www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele_chc/tele_chc_shcf.html and www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele_chc/tele_chc_shcm.html.

Meanwhile, the DH's Integrated Treatment Centre in Kowloon Bay, and the Hospital Authority's Special Medical Clinics at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital will continue to provide Mpox vaccination services for their clients.

For more details, please visit the CHP's page on [Mpox](#).

[HKSAR Government holds National Ecology Day Launching Ceremony \(with photos\)](#)

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) held the National Ecology Day Launching Ceremony today (August 15) in support of the country's designation of August 15 as National Ecology Day starting this year, with a view to promoting to society the importance of pursuing ecological civilisation and being conscious of the need for action to protect the environment. The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki; member of the Standing Committee of the 14th National People's Congress and Member of the Legislative Council Ms Starry Lee; and the Acting Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Miss Diane Wong, attended the ceremony as officiating guests.

In his opening speech, Mr Chan said that the Central Authorities have placed the construction of ecological civilisation at a prominent position on its overall work agenda, with a series of major strategic deployment to implement the important concept of "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets". He stressed that the HKSAR Government has been sparing no effort to work with all sectors of society to spearhead ecological

civilisation in three major areas, namely strengthening nature and ecological conservation, strengthening citywide promotion of environmental protection, and strengthening rural conservation and revitalisation.

Mr Chan said, "The report of the 20th National Congress released last year emphasises that nature provides the basic conditions for human survival and development, and that harmony between humanity and nature must be maintained when planning our development. The HKSAR Government will continue to work at full steam with all sectors of society towards achieving ecological civilisation, and building a beautiful China and a beautiful Hong Kong where humans and nature co-exist harmoniously."

Speaking at the ceremony, Ms Lee shared the concept behind the establishment of National Ecology Day. She said that the establishment of National Ecology Day is not only a symbol, but also a driving force. It will enhance the public awareness and consciousness on the need for actions for ecological environment protection and has far-reaching significance and an historical impact on establishing a green and low-carbon economy, promoting transformation and upgrading to achieve high-quality development and fostering the construction of Chinese modernisation. She hoped that National Ecology Day may become an important means for Hong Kong's promotion of ecological civilisation and environmental protection, with a view to raising the awareness of environmental protection in all sectors of society and guiding Hong Kong citizens to gradually develop a good habit of practicing ecological civilisation.

Other officiating guests of the Launching Ceremony included the Permanent Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Environment), Miss Janice Tse; the Acting Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, Mr Mickey Lai; and the Director of Environmental Protection, Dr Samuel Chui.

The HKSAR Government and non-governmental organisations have announced earlier various special activities and offers provided today in support of National Ecology Day, including free admission of eco-facilities, free guided eco-tours, night safari, workshops, seminars and distribution of souvenirs, as well as special discounts for gift redemptions at GREEN@COMMUNITY's Recycling Stations under the Environmental Protection Department. Details of the special activities and offers have been uploaded to the Hong Kong Biodiversity Information Hub website of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (bih.gov.hk/en/education-programmes/programmes/index.html) as well as the websites or social media platforms of the participating organisations.

