

# Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cannabis buds worth about \$25 million (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 110 kilograms of suspected cannabis buds with an estimated market value of about \$25 million at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound on July 28.

Through risk assessment, Customs on that day inspected a seaborne consignment, declared as carrying leisure patio chairs, arriving in Hong Kong from Canada at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound. Upon inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected cannabis buds concealed inside nine carton boxes printed with chair patterns.

After a follow-up investigation and a controlled delivery operation, Customs officers yesterday (August 9) arrested a 29-year-old local man, who was suspected to be connected with the case, in Fo Tan.

Two holding charges have been laid against the arrested man, with one count of attempting to traffic in a dangerous drug and one count of obstructing a member of the Customs and Excise Service. He will appear at the Shatin Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (August 11).

Customs reminds members of the public to stay alert and not to participate in drug trafficking activities for monetary return. They must not accept hiring or delegation from another party to carry controlled items into and out of Hong Kong. They are also reminded not to carry unknown items for other people.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, cannabis and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) are classified as dangerous drugs. Importation of products (including food or drinks) containing cannabis or THC into Hong Kong is prohibited unless the relevant provisions in the Ordinance are complied with. In order to avoid breaching the law inadvertently, special attention should be paid to the packaging labels of those products.

Trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002)).



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## [Hong Kong Customs arrests two female grocery store owners suspected of operating money service without licence](#)

Hong Kong Customs arrested two female owners of a grocery store on July 21 and today (August 10) respectively. They were suspected of operating a money service without a licence, in contravention of the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance (AMLO).

Customs had earlier discovered a post on a social media platform alleging that a female owner of a grocery store in Tai Po failed to remit money after receiving a payment for remittance from a foreign domestic helper (FDH).

Customs officers then swiftly conducted an investigation and found that the grocery store did not have a valid money service operator licence on the date of receiving the remittance payment. The two female owners of the store, aged 44 and 19, were subsequently arrested on July 21 and today respectively.

An investigation is ongoing and the two arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation.

Under the AMLO, a person who wishes to operate a remittance or money changing service needs to first obtain a licence from the Customs and Excise Department. The maximum penalty for such operators without a valid licence upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Customs has been striving to combat unlicensed money services. Regarding the aforesaid case, Customs has already contacted relevant consulate offices and FDH organisations to arrange related educational talks and offer tips for choosing remittance services for FDHs so as to enhance their understanding of the AMLO.

Customs reminds FDHs not to procure services from unlicensed money service operators. FDHs can visit the Customs website ([eservices.customs.gov.hk/MSOS/index?request\\_locale=en](http://eservices.customs.gov.hk/MSOS/index?request_locale=en)) to verify the licence status of service providers if they are found to be suspicious. Moreover, when receiving remittance services, FDHs should avoid choosing the option of "Pay First, Remit Later" and should verify the completion of a remittance immediately at the shop.

Customs appealed for the co-operation of FDH employers and agencies to spread the above messages to their serving or newly arrived FDHs. They could work together to assist FDHs in choosing a proper money service operator carefully in order to protect the benefits of FDHs.

Members of the public may report any suspected unlicensed money service operation to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/)).

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## **CHP investigates confirmed Mpox case**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) said today (August 10) 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 strongly advised to receive Mpox vaccination.

The case involves a 38-year-old male patient with underlying illness. He developed localised skin rash since July 31. He visited Gleneagles Hospital Hong Kong on August 1 and was admitted for treatment. He was subsequently discharged on August 4. The CHP's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch confirmed that his samples tested positive for the virus today and arrangements were made for him to be admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital. He is in stable condition.

An initial investigation revealed that he had high-risk exposure in Hong Kong during the incubation period. 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 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 rashes, 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.

High-risk target groups can receive Mpox vaccination at the designated Mpox vaccination centre (situated at 2/F, CHP building, 147C Argyle Street, Mong Kok) by appointment through email ([mpv\\_booking@dh.gov.hk](mailto:mpv_booking@dh.gov.hk)) or telephone booking line (2547 1900) during office hours. They can also receive Mpox walk-in vaccinations at all of the DH's Social Hygiene Service Clinics (SoCHS) (namely Chai Wan SoCHS, Wan Chai Male SoCHS, Wan Chai Female SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Male SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Female 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](http://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](http://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](#).

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## [Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Swimming Pool temporarily closed](#)

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (August 10) that Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Swimming Pool in the Yuen Long District has been temporarily closed for cleaning and superchlorination following the discovery of a small amount of faeces in the pool.

It will be reopened at 6.30am tomorrow.

The department appeals to swimmers to be considerate and to keep the swimming pools clean. They are advised not to swim after a full meal and should use the toilet facilities if necessary before swimming.

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## [Consent given to resumption of foundation works for public housing development project at Kai Tak Site 2B3](#)

A Government spokesman said today (August 10) that consent was given to resume foundation works for the public housing development project at Kai Tak Site 2B3 which was partially suspended earlier due to inducing minor settlement at the MTR Sung Wong Toi emergency egress point near Sung Wong Toi Station.

The spokesman said that since the reading recorded in a settlement monitoring checkpoint installed at the MTR Sung Wong Toi emergency egress point of Tuen Ma Line had reached the pre-set trigger level for suspension of works on June 5, 2023, the relevant foundation works of the aforesaid project within 30 metres from the emergency egress point were suspended on the same day. The Government then made an announcement about the situation on June 7, and the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) under the Office of the Permanent

Secretary for Housing, the Buildings Department (BD) and the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) confirmed the structural safety of the relevant railway facilities while the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) and the MTRCL also confirmed the safety of railway operation.

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s building professional team subsequently submitted to the ICU and the MTRCL an investigation report on the incident and a proposal of mitigation measures to ensure that the structural safety of the nearby railway facilities concerned would not be affected by the resumption of works. The HA's building professional team then requested for resumption of works.

The investigation report and mitigation measures proposal submitted by the HA indicated that the resumption of works would not affect the structural safety of the railway facilities and safe operation of the railway. The MTRCL has been consulted and agreed that the resumption of works will not affect the structural safety of the railway facilities and the safety of railway operation. The ICU accepted the proposal for the resumption of works. The ICU, the BD and the MTRCL have inspected the railway facilities and confirmed that they are structurally safe. The EMSD has reviewed the monitoring data submitted by the MTRCL in relation to safe operation of the railway and confirmed that the condition of the railway meets the operational safety requirements. The EMSD has also confirmed that the MTRCL had put in place stringent monitoring measures to ensure the safety of railway operation.

After the consideration of relevant advice and the mitigation measures proposed by the HA, the request for resumption of works was accepted today, and the relevant suspended foundation works were also resumed today. The ICU has accepted the detailed engineering analyses and the revised plans submitted by the HA's building professional team to amend the emergency egress point's pre-set settlement trigger level for suspension of works to 36 millimetres. The HA's building professional team has confirmed that such an extent of settlement will not affect the structural safety of the railway facilities concerned. The MTRCL has also confirmed that the revised trigger level will not affect the safety of railway operation.

The ICU and the MTRCL will continue to monitor closely the situation and maintain close communication with the BD and the EMSD to uphold the structural safety of the railway facilities and the safety of railway operation.