

16 persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations (with photos)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a series of territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations codenamed "Twilight", and joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion" and "Windsand", for four consecutive days from July 24 to yesterday (July 27). A total of 14 suspected illegal workers, one suspected employer and one suspected aider and abettor were arrested.

During operation "Twilight", ImmD Task Force officers raided 18 target locations including commercial buildings, a massage parlour, premises under renovation, restaurants and retail shops. Seven suspected illegal workers and one suspected employer were arrested. The arrested suspected illegal workers comprised two men and five women, aged 33 to 52. Among them, one woman was a holder of a recognisance form, which prohibits her from taking any employment. One man, aged 43, was suspected of employing the illegal workers and was also arrested.

During operation "Champion", enforcement officers raided 117 target locations in Central and Western districts, including a laundry, premises under renovation and restaurants. Six suspected illegal workers and one suspected aider and abettor were arrested. The arrested suspected illegal workers comprised six women, aged 27 to 46. One woman, aged 74, who was suspected of aiding and abetting a person who breached the condition of stay in Hong Kong, was also arrested.

Furthermore, during operation "Windsand", one male Mainland visitor, aged 26, was arrested for breaching his condition of stay by being involved in suspected illegal parallel trading activities at Po Wan Road in Sheung Shui district. The goods mainly included cosmetics products and skincare products.

An ImmD spokesman said, "Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him or her 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."

The spokesman warned, "As stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, an illegal immigrant, a person who is the subject of a removal order or a deportation order, an overstayer or a person who was refused permission to land is 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 spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. Under the Immigration Ordinance, the maximum penalty for an employer employing a person who is not lawfully employable, i.e. an illegal immigrant, a person who is the subject of a removal order or a deportation order, an overstayer or a person who was refused permission to land, has been significantly increased from a fine of \$350,000 and three years' imprisonment to a fine of \$500,000 and 10 years' imprisonment to reflect the gravity of such offences. The director, manager, secretary, partner, etc, of the company concerned may also bear criminal liability. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence.

According to the 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. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$150,000 and to imprisonment for one year. In that connection, the spokesman would like to remind all employers not to defy the law by employing illegal workers. The ImmD will continue to take resolute enforcement action to combat such offences.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct an 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 ImmD officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threats 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 intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter or temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments immediately.



[Update on dengue fever](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 28) reported the latest number of dengue fever (DF) cases, and urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From July 21 to yesterday (July 27), the CHP recorded one imported DF case. The patient had been to Nepal during the incubation period.

As of yesterday, 20 imported cases of DF had been recorded in 2023. In 2022, 26 imported cases of DF were recorded.

The latest surveillance data shows that there is an increase in DF cases noted in some places in Asia (such as Malaysia, Taiwan and Thailand) and South America compared to the same period last year, and the trend is rising. Members of the public, while travelling abroad, should stay vigilant and carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures. Detailed information on the latest DF situation in Hong Kong, as well as neighbouring and overseas countries and areas, has been uploaded to the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df_imported_cases_and_overseas_figures_eng.pdf).

"Apart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from areas affected by DF should apply insect repellent for 14 days upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the following pages for more information: the DF page of the [CHP](#) and the [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), and the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

Speech by CE at business luncheon of Malaysia Business Community: “Partnering for Success” (English only) (with photo/video)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at the business luncheon of Malaysia Business Community: "Partnering for Success" in

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, today (July 28):

Your Excellency Minister Anthony Loke Siew Fook (Minister of Transport of Malaysia),
Deputy Minister Liew Chin Tong (Deputy Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry of Malaysia), Dr Peter Lam (Chairman of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council), Honourable Ambassador Ouyang Yujing (Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to Malaysia), distinguished guests,
ladies and gentlemen,

A very good afternoon to you all. Selamat tengah hari!

I must first of all thank Honourable Minister Anthony Loke for his very kind words, particularly in Cantonese. I feel very warm at heart whenever he uses his kind words in Cantonese. I think maybe the Hong Kong delegation feels the same. I agree and welcome all the suggestions by Honourable Anthony Loke regarding our co-operation. We see eye-to-eye in a lot of things and we think alike. And more than that, we act alike. He and I both wore red ties for this lunch without talking to each other before. But we talk to each other very warmly and closely and that reflects the close bonding between Hong Kong and Malaysia.

This is my first visit to Malaysia since I took office as the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the PRC.

It's great to be in beautiful Malaysia, to enjoy its famous hospitality. To take in the truly amazing sights and sounds of Kuala Lumpur. To marvel at the diversity in this vibrant country.

I am also grateful to Honourable Minister Loke and Deputy Minister Liew for being with us today. Your kind presence graces the occasion, and showcases the strong friendship between Hong Kong and Malaysia.

I have brought with me 30 business leaders from such fields as finance, logistics, legal services, and innovation and technology, etc. And five of the most senior officials came with me as well. Those five most senior officials join me to ensure that we tell Hong Kong story to as widely an audience as possible. We are all together on a week-long trip in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). We are here on a mission.

Our task is to explore successful partnerships with Malaysia and the wider ASEAN region; to take our people-to-people, business-to-business and government-to-government relations on a new and exciting level.

Unlike the famous action movie screened at the cinemas now, we are not here on an impossible mission – instead, we are here on a "Mission Possible"! With a big cast of stars in my delegation.

Let me set the scene.

Earlier this year, President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in Beijing. President Xi noted that this year marks the 10th

anniversary of the establishment of the "comprehensive strategic partnership" between China and Malaysia. He urged us all to advance the steady growth of China-Malaysia relations, and strive for greater progress, injecting new impetus to promote prosperity of the two countries and the region.

In this spirit of renewed friendship, we embark on our mission here.

Our trip comes at a crucial time. Hong Kong, Asia and the world at large are on the path to normalcy, after three long-suffering years of the pandemic. But the path ahead is full of challenges. Geopolitical tensions, supply chain interruptions, and inflationary pressures have all been dragging the global economic recovery.

Consider some statistics. According to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) Economic Outlook issued last month, global GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth this year is projected to be 2.7 per cent, the lowest annual rate since the global financial crisis in 2008, with the exception of the pandemic year of 2020.

Mainland China is a bright spot in the Outlook, with 5.4 per cent GDP growth predicted for the full year of 2023.

In Hong Kong, thanks to a strong revival of local consumption and the much welcome return of tourists, we are expecting growth of between 3.5 per cent and 5.5 per cent for 2023.

Meanwhile, Malaysia's economic performance is also most encouraging. Last year, the Malaysian economy grew by 8.7 per cent, the highest growth recorded in decades. As for the ASEAN bloc, economic growth is forecast to be 4.6 per cent in 2023.

These figures speak a simple truth – that the world's economic centre of gravity is moving eastwards. And it is crucial for us to do all we can in capitalising on this trend of robust growth in our region.

For Hong Kong, economic resilience is underpinned by the enduring success of the "one country, two systems" principle. The unique beauty of "one country, two systems" is that it also ensures that our city remains openly connected to the rest of the world.

This global connectivity is deeply rooted in our world-class financial system, our low and simple tax system, our free port status, as well as the free flows of people, ideas and data. Hong Kong is the only city in China which practises common law. English is an official language alongside Chinese. All this is music to the ears of our international business community. It also helps to explain why Hong Kong continues to be ranked as the world's freest economy.

In fact, Hong Kong is the only place in the world where the global advantage and the China advantage converge in one single city. This convergence of advantages allows us to thrive in the Greater Bay Area development, or the GBA.

Encompassing Hong Kong, Macao and nine major cities in southern China, the GBA is home to some 86 million consumers. It has a combined GDP of about US\$1.9 trillion in 2022, equivalent to the world's 10th largest economy.

Hong Kong brings to the GBA our international experience and expertise in finance and trade, our global aviation leadership, as well as world-class professional services, to name but a few. We welcome Malaysian enterprises and entrepreneurs to partner with Hong Kong to tap into the area's promising business and investment opportunities. The GBA, with its prime geographical location, is intrinsic to the Belt and Road Initiative. In turn, this amplifies Hong Kong's capabilities as a conduit between our country and the rest of the world.

From trade, commerce, and professional services, to green finance, voluntary carbon trading, and cultural exchanges, we see manifold advantages in co-operating with Belt and Road economies, and contributing as a springboard for their better access to opportunities in China.

All these are "mission possible", with the array of "one country, two systems" advantages I have mentioned earlier.

On that note, Hong Kong is going to hold the eighth edition of the annual Belt and Road Summit come September. This high-level international event will bring together government and business leaders from around the world, and provide a valuable platform to facilitate co-operation and foster friendly relations. I sincerely welcome our friends from Malaysia to join us for this signature event.

Our invitations are certainly not confined to a single event. Last year, we introduced a series of major initiatives to better facilitate and attract enterprises and talents to Hong Kong.

We established a new Hong Kong Investment Corporation to identify and target promising investment opportunities. This is brand new. We are setting up a Co-Investment Fund of HK\$30 billion – equivalent to US\$3.8 billion – to attract companies to Hong Kong and invest in them.

We are particularly keen on attracting businesses that excel in such areas as health technology, AI (artificial intelligence), fintech and data science, to come to Hong Kong and leverage the abundant opportunities we offer.

For professionals, a new Top Talent Pass Scheme was introduced to entice talents from around the world, to pursue their careers, establish their businesses, or simply make a home in Hong Kong.

We welcome Malaysian enterprises and talents to realise your potentials in Hong Kong, through Hong Kong. Our colleagues in Invest Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office will be happy to share with you our many partnership programmes and opportunities.

Now that our economies are getting back on track after the pandemic, we

are eager to capitalise on mutually beneficial arrangements such as the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between ASEAN and Hong Kong.

ASEAN is our second-largest trading partner in the world. The value of our merchandise trade amounted to US\$165 billion last year. Meanwhile, Hong Kong's bilateral trade in goods with Malaysia reached US\$28 billion last year, making the country our ninth-largest trading partner in the world.

We will continue to leverage our connectivity with the Mainland and international markets, to promote high-quality development for all.

To achieve that, Hong Kong is eager to join RCEP, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, which came into full force last year and is now the world's largest FTA.

We are thankful for, and would continue to count on, Malaysia's support for Hong Kong's accession to RCEP.

Hong Kong is determined to make full use of the "one country, two systems" advantages to bring common prosperity to Malaysia, as well as the rest of the RCEP community.

That is why I am pleased to be witnessing the signing of 11 MOUs (memoranda of understanding) and agreements between Hong Kong and Malaysia today. They cover a number of key areas including trade and finance, railway and property development, digital transformation and fintech.

What's more, I am delighted to note that the Malaysian Government has extended the visa-free stay period in Malaysia from one month to 90 days, for holders of the Hong Kong SAR Passport. Thank you, Malaysia!

As you all know, Malaysia has long been a popular destination for Hong Kong businesspeople and tourists. This is certainly a milestone in strengthening our economic and trade ties and reinforcing our people-to-people exchanges and friendship.

That friendship of our peoples, of course, has long been established with the popularity of Hong Kong's TV shows and pop music, in the Cantonese-speaking and wider community in Malaysia.

The friendship is also reflected by how Hong Kong cinema-goers celebrated and shared the joy when Michelle Yeoh won multiple best actress awards globally. That reflects our common language on entertainment and friendship which has brightened up our people-to-people exchanges.

I am sure those exchanges will be filled with even more fun with our brand-new attractions. Yes, Hong Kong continues to dazzle with the signature skyline along Victoria Harbour, our vibrant wine and dine scenes filled with Michelin-starred restaurants, as well as the proximity to breath-taking views in our many country parks and hiking trails.

And now, you can also marvel at the latest additions to our cultural metropolis, such as the Hong Kong Palace Museum, which showcases national

treasures from Beijing's Forbidden City, and our global visual art museum, M+. They are all situated in the burgeoning West Kowloon Cultural District, alongside other art venues by the sea.

For other ways to enjoy some fun with water, visit the Ocean Park's Water World, Asia's first all-weather, year-round waterfront water park. Or, if you are looking for other ways to chill out, Hong Kong Disneyland Resort will open the world's first and biggest themed land on the Frozen movies later this year.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am confident that our relations will continue to soar to new heights. And I invite each and every one of you to join us on our mission to explore new successful partnerships between Hong Kong and Malaysia.

I know that it will be Malaysia's Independence Day next month. As it goes in Malaysia's national motto, "unity is strength". I wish you all a happy Independence Day, and let's unite together to bring new strength to our co-operation.

Please enjoy the lunch! Thank you very much.



[Cluster of Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae cases in Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority.

The spokesperson for Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital (AHNH) made the following announcement today (July 28):

Three male patients and one female patients (aged 36 to 85) in a medical mixed gender ward have been confirmed as being carriers of Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae since July 26. Two patients are hospitalised

under isolation in AHNH and one patient has been transferred to Tai Po Hospital for further medical care under isolation. All patients are in stable condition. The remaining patient had already been discharged.

The wards concerned will continue to adopt the following enhanced infection control measures:

1. Enhanced patient and environmental screening procedures;
2. Continued application of stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene for staff and patients; and
3. Enhanced cleaning and disinfection for the environment and facilities of the wards.

The hospital will continue to closely monitor the situation in the ward concerned. The case has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

EPD awards North Lantau Transfer Station and Outlying Islands Transfer Facilities Second Follow-On Contract

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (July 28) announced that, following an open tender process, Canvest – Paul Y Joint Venture has won the North Lantau Transfer Station and Outlying Islands Transfer Facilities Second Follow-On Contract.

"The North Lantau Transfer Station (NLTS) commenced operation in 1997, while the Outlying Islands Transfer Facilities (OITF) commenced service progressively from 1998 to 2003. They have been in operation for over 20 years and most of the facilities have been ageing with severe wear and tear. We need to implement refurbishment and upgrading works to maintain reliable and safe waste transfer services and enhance the operational efficiency and environmental performance of the transfer station and transfer facilities. The EPD plans to start the works after the expiry of the existing operation contract. During the works period, the normal services at the NLTS and OITF will be maintained," an EPD spokesperson said.

The NLTS is located on Sham Shui Kok Drive, Siu Ho Wan, on North Lantau, while the OITF comprises a network of seven small-scale waste transfer facilities located at Mui Wo, Cheung Chau, Peng Chau, Hei Ling Chau, Yung Shue Wan, Sok Kwu Wan and Ma Wan. Every day, the waste delivered to the NLTS and OITF is immediately containerised in purpose-built sealed containers for onward sea transportation by purpose-built container vessels to the West New

Territories Landfill for disposal.

Upon completion of the improvement works, the NLTS and OITF will have their waste handling efficiency comprehensively improved and environmental performance further enhanced, with an upgraded odour control system, better vehicle washing facilities, upgraded aged waste container vessels with new zero-emission electric propulsion models, enhanced energy-saving management, improved facility energy efficiency along with an improved appearance.

The spokesperson added, "Regarding the successful bidder of the Second Follow-On Contract, Canvest – Paul Y Joint Venture, its lead joint venture participant is Canvest Environmental Protection Group Company Limited, which is a non-state owned waste management company and is also participating in the cleansing and waste collection services in Hong Kong; while the other joint venture participant is Paul Y. Construction Company, Limited. With the rapid development of the environmental protection industry in the Mainland, we hope that the new contractor can bring in innovative ideas and state-of-the-art technology to the management and operation of the transfer station and transfer facilities in Hong Kong."