

Hong Kong Customs detects case of precious metals and stones dealer carrying out specified transactions without registration

Hong Kong Customs today (November 15) detected a case involving a local company that conducted multiple transactions of diamonds, with each transaction valued at over HK\$120,000 without registration under the Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones Regulatory Regime. A director of the company was arrested.

The investigation is ongoing. The arrested person has been released on bail pending further investigation.

According to the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance (Cap. 615), the Regime came into effect on April 1, 2023. Any person who is seeking to carry on a business of dealing in precious metals and stones in Hong Kong and engage in any transaction(s) (whether making or receiving a payment) with a total value at or above HK\$120,000 in Hong Kong is required to register with the Commissioner of Customs and Excise. Any dealer, other than a registrant, who claims to be a registrant, claims to be authorised to carry out, or carries out any cash or non-cash transaction(s) with a total value at or above HK\$120,000 is liable to a maximum fine of HK\$100,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

Hong Kong Customs reminds all dealers that the transitional period for registration under the Regime has ended. Any dealers in precious metals and stones must obtain the relevant registration before they can carry out any cash or non-cash transaction(s) with a total value at or above HK\$120,000.

For the forms, procedures and guidelines to submit applications for registration, please visit the website for Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones Registration System (www.drs.customs.gov.hk) or Hong Kong Customs' webpage (www.customs.gov.hk/en/service-enforcement-information/anti-money-laundering/supervision-of-dealers-in-precious-metals-and-ston/index.html).

Members of the public may report any suspected transactions involving precious metals and stones with a total value at or above HK\$120,000 conducted without the required registration to Customs' 24-hour hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).

HKETO Berlin supports Five Flavours Asian Film Festival held in Poland (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Berlin (HKETO Berlin) is supporting the 18th Five Flavours Asian Film Festival taking place from November 13 to 20 (Warsaw time) in Warsaw.

Speaking before the screening of the opening film "Time Still Turns the Pages" on November 13 (Warsaw time), the Deputy Director of HKETO Berlin, Mr Billy Leung, highlighted that Hong Kong is an international hub for arts, cultural and creative industries with promising development opportunities.

"The Five Flavours Asian Film Festival has been an important platform to elevate the visibility of Hong Kong films in Poland and promote cultural exchanges between the two places. We have been actively presenting outstanding film productions, and encouraging talented filmmakers to participate in the festival. We are happy to see that a total of 10 Hong Kong movies would be shown in cinemas and online during the festival."

The festival also presents a dedicated section, "Portrait: Stanley Kwan", featuring five film productions directed or produced by the acclaimed director Stanley Kwan, accompanied by an online interview with director Kwan enhancing the experience for the local audiences. Sasha Chuk, the director of the movie "Fly Me to The Moon", will also join the festival and share with audiences after screenings on November 15 and November 17.

HKETO Berlin also organised a cultural exchange seminar themed "Hong Kong as a Centre for Cultural Exchange between Europe and Asia", together with the Vistula University and the Centre for International Relations on November 12 (Warsaw time) in Warsaw. Speakers at the event included curators of the National Museum in Warsaw and M+ museum in Hong Kong, who spoke about their respective efforts in encouraging cultural exchanges between Europe and Hong Kong. Arts students and participants from the arts community in Poland also benefited from a lively panel discussion where the speakers shared their views on fostering arts and cultural exchanges, as well as promoting collaboration opportunities between Europe and Asia, among other things.

About HKETO Berlin

HKETO Berlin is the official representative of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government in commercial relations and other economic and trade matters in Poland as well as Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Switzerland.



11 incorporated owners fined a total of \$32,700 for failing to conduct annual inspections of fire service installations or equipment on their premises

The Fire Services Department (FSD) has been mounting territory-wide special enforcement actions in phases at domestic and composite buildings since July. As of end-October, the FSD inspected 122 such buildings in Kwun Tong District and issued 31 warning letters to relevant incorporated owners, reminding them to submit valid fire service installations and equipment certificates before the specified deadline.

Eleven incorporated owners of these buildings in Kwun Tong District (listed in the Annex) were prosecuted by the FSD for failing to conduct annual inspections of fire service installations or equipment on their premises. They were convicted and fined a total of \$32,700 at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (November 15).

According to the Fire Service (Installations and Equipment) Regulations, any person who owns any fire service installation or equipment installed in any premises commits an offence if they fail to have such fire service installation or equipment inspected by a registered contractor at least once in every 12 months. Upon conviction, the maximum penalty is a fine of \$50,000.

The FSD will continue to conduct territory-wide special enforcement actions in various districts and remind owners of fire service installations or equipment in the premises to have such fire service installations or equipment inspected by a registered contractor at least once in every 12 months.

Women Empowerment Fund invites 2024-25 second-round applications

The Women Empowerment Fund is open for the second round of applications this year starting from today (November 15) until December 16. The Fund subsidises projects that support women in juggling their jobs and family life, bring awareness to women's physical and mental health, and unleash their potential.

Set up in June 2023, the Fund aims to empower women, regardless of their age, occupation or background, to unlock their full potential in their respective roles, ultimately achieving the goal of promoting women's development in Hong Kong.

The Fund is divided into general and thematic projects. The funding cap for each one-year and two-year general project is \$400,000 and \$800,000 respectively. Starting from this year, the Fund has regularised the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Exchange Programme under the thematic project. Each exchange programme shall be completed within one year, and the funding cap is \$120,000.

In addition, a new thematic project, the Programme on Women's Participation in Community Services, was launched this year. It aims to encourage women to make use of their strengths to plan and launch community service projects, thereby promoting care and inclusion. Each community services programme shall be completed within one year, and the funding cap is \$400,000.

The Fund accepts two rounds of applications each year. The Guide to Application and the application form have been uploaded to the Fund's website (www.wef.gov.hk). Interested eligible women's groups and non-governmental organisations may submit an electronic or paper application.

Postal services to Canada subject to delay

â€‹Hongkong Post announced today (15 November) that, as advised by the

postal administration of Canada, due to a local strike, mail delivery services to Canada are subject to delay.