

## Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (April 30):

Reporter: Good morning, Mr Lee. Firstly, with regards to the plastic ban policy, has the Environment and Ecology Bureau failed in policy explanation given the confusion over the plastic ban on, for instance, display of sushi at supermarkets and also confusion over dine-in at some stores? And also is your Government still confident in pushing forward with the waste charging scheme in August, given the situation we have seen with the plastic ban so far? And the second question, with regards to the upcoming Golden Week as well, is the Government worried in particular about the weather issue affecting its highlight firework event for the city on the first day of the Golden Week holiday? And why isn't there a sort of special border arrangement as seen in previous holidays during this Golden Week holiday? Is there any particular reason for it and what sort of measures would the Government take to ensure that the city can handle the tourists coming into the city during this holiday period? Thank you.

Chief Executive: In regard to waste charging, in particular, the use of plastic bags to do graded charging, it is already in the law. The Government is seriously looking into ways to implement it. That is why we have introduced this drill to 14 targeted premises to see how it is being implemented, what problems are being encountered, and what are the response and opinions of the people who are going through the drill. To me, a policy that affects each and every citizen of our almost 7.5-million population is a serious matter that needs to be examined so that while we want to ensure the environment is well protected, we also want to proceed steadily so that people will be able to change their behaviour in a steady manner. Also very important is, because it's affecting everybody, how people think and feel about it. So I have asked the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration to oversee this drill to listen to their views, and we will examine the feedback to decide how we will proceed. In regard to plastic bags, the Environment and Ecology Bureau has indicated the stock is quite enough for its present use, so they have made arrangements to deal with that matter. We will, as soon as possible, review the overall implementation details in the drill and also examine the views and opinions expressed by the people involved and come to a decision. When we come to that stage, we will inform the public as soon as possible.

As regards our preparation for the Golden Week, we have been fully geared. The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau has on more than one occasion organised interdepartmental meetings to ensure that full preparation has been made in different areas. These include ensuring that at the boundary control points, including the airport, there will be sufficient manpower and special

arrangements so as to ensure that the crossing at the boundary control points will be smooth, orderly, and will be handled as quickly as possible. We will be making special transportation arrangements; in some areas we'll be increasing the supply of public transport by some 40 per cent. The command centre will be in operation 24 hours so as to address different issues that may come out. There will also be a special arrangement for some pickup locations for cross-boundary transportation, and on some particular days, the last train that will go to Lo Wu will also be extended. The announcement of all these measures have been made very clearly.

And of course we want the experience to be a pleasant one, so we are very glad that those who are involved in the service industries are all geared up to ensure that they will provide special services to ensure that they will make good use of the opportunity, and also ensure that there will be a good experience. The Tourism Commission, together with the relevant bodies, will also be turning out on those days to ensure that things will be worked out in an orderly and smoothly manner.

We have made a number of promotion activities such as the pyrotechnic display. Of course we want to do the best to ensure that it will be most welcome and enjoyed by everybody, tourists and Hong Kong people. We will do our best. But, of course, weather is always unpredictable. We will inform the public about the decision we make as soon as possible, as circumstances permit. But there are a wide range of activities that have been arranged to welcome visitors during the Golden Week, and a lot of them will proceed regardless of weather conditions. Of course, we will do our best to ensure that visitors will have a good experience.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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## [Red flags lowered at Repulse Bay Beach and South Bay Beach](#)

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 (April 30) that since the water off Repulse Bay Beach and South Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island, is now suitable for swimming, the red flags have been lowered.

The red flags were hoisted at the beaches earlier on after a red tide

was found.

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## [Hong Kong Customs prepares for Labour Day Golden Week of Mainland \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs has drawn up a series of measures to prepare for the arrival of Mainland visitors during the Labour Day Golden Week of the Mainland to ensure smooth passenger and vehicular flows at each control point. Customs has also stepped up patrols at popular shopping spots in various districts and distributed pamphlets at land boundary control points and popular shopping spots, with a view to safeguarding and promoting rights of local consumers and visitors, and creating a good travel experience for visitors.

The Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, inspected operations of the Lo Wu Control Point and the Express Rail Link West Kowloon Control Point, and met frontline staff there this morning (April 30) to learn about and direct the arrangements at the control points for the Labour Day Golden Week of the Mainland. Ms Ho said the department will flexibly deploy manpower to ensure smooth operations and strengthen passenger clearance at each control point for faster and smoother clearance of travellers. The department will also maintain close liaison with the Mainland Customs and Macao Customs to share the latest real-time situation of each control point, so that necessary co-ordination and arrangements can be made.

With the Labour Day Golden Week of the Mainland approaching, Customs has enhanced its promotion of consumer protection to Mainland residents. A series of new promotional videos were produced on Customs official accounts on Mainland social platforms, including WeChat and Douyin, to unveil common unfair trade practices and remind Mainland tourists to stay alert when shopping and avoid falling into consumer pitfalls of unfair trade practices. They were also reminded to pay attention to relevant import and export requirements as well as prohibited and controlled items to avoid contravention of the law.

Moreover, Customs has launched a special operation since April 27 to step up patrols during the Labour Day Golden Week of the Mainland at popular shopping spots in various districts and to remind traders to comply with the requirements of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO), with a view to safeguarding rights of local consumers and visitors.

Apart from patrolling popular shopping spots, Customs officers will also drive publicity at dried seafood and ginseng shops, medicine shops and

jewellery shops in different tourist shopping areas such as Yau Tsim Mong and Causeway Bay. Retail shops and workers in the tourist industry will be reminded to comply with the requirements of the TD0.

Customs officers will also distribute pamphlets at land boundary control points and popular shopping spots to remind visitors that they should have a good understanding of a product's specifications and make comparisons before purchase. They should patronise shops with a good reputation. They are also reminded to check carefully the total price and unit price of the goods before making payment, and to retain the transaction receipts and related records, which can be used as the basis for follow-up action in case a complaint is lodged in the future.

Customs has long been concerned about visitors being misled to make purchases by unfair trade practices and has established a Quick Response Team to handle urgent complaints lodged by short-haul visitors. The complaints will be promptly referred to investigators to handle with priority.

Under the TD0, any trader who adopts unfair trade practices, including making false trade descriptions in relation to goods, misleading omissions, aggressive commercial practices as well as bait and switch practices, commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report suspected violations of the TD0 to the 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)).





## **DH steps up enforcement to combat illegal sale of drugs and Chinese herbal medicines in retail shops for Labour Day Golden Week of Mainland**

In view of the approaching Labour Day Golden Week of the Mainland, the Department of Health (DH) and Police yesterday (April 29) mounted a joint operation in Yau Tsim Mong District to combat the illegal sale of drugs and Chinese herbal medicines (Chm) in retail shops with a view to further safeguarding rights of local consumers and visitors.

The DH raided two retail shops, which use the Chinese name "阿婆", in Tsim Sha Tsui and Mong Kok respectively. During the operation, nine unregistered pharmaceutical products and Part 1 poisons under the Pharmacy

and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138) and a Schedule 2 Chm under the Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Cap. 549) were seized as the shops did not have the required licenses. The Police arrested three men aged between 29 and 33. They were suspected of illegal possession of Part 1 poisons and unregistered pharmaceutical products under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance, and illegal possession and sale of a Schedule 2 Chm under the Chinese Medicine Ordinance respectively. The DH's investigations are ongoing.

According to the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance, all pharmaceutical products must be registered with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong (the Board) before they can be legally sold in the market. Illegal possession or sale of unregistered pharmaceutical products, and illegal possession or sale of Part 1 poisons under the Pharmacy and Poisons Regulations (Cap. 138A) without relevant licence are criminal offences. The maximum penalty for each offence is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment upon conviction.

Furthermore, anyone who wishes to engage in the retail business of toxic Chm specified in Schedule 1 of the Chinese Medicine Ordinance and Chm specified in Schedule 2 of the Ordinance, which are commonly used in Hong Kong, must first apply for the relevant licence from the Chinese Medicines Board under the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong (CMCHK). Sale and possession for retail of Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 Chm without a licence are criminal offences. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment upon conviction.

To prevent the inappropriate use of pharmacy logos and titles by medicine retailers, the Board endorsed and announced that applicants for a medicine retailer licence (i.e. listed seller of poisons licence) who are not Authorized Sellers of Poisons (commonly known as pharmacies), must not use or display the Chinese title "藥房" in its premises. The DH has enhanced its inspections against licensed listed sellers of poisons and Chm retailers located in tourist areas in the past month, and reminded the licence holders to comply with the requirements of the relevant laws and regulations.

Moreover, the DH has formulated a label for identification of Authorized Sellers of Poisons and the labels are being sent to each pharmacy progressively for display in a conspicuous position in the pharmacy. Members of the public could obtain information of the registered pharmacy by scanning the QR Code on the label. For details, please see the [relevant press release](#).

The DH has long reminded members of the public and tourists through promotions and education to purchase medicines from licensed medicine traders. For the list of licensed Drug Dealers, please visit the [website of the Drug Office of the DH](#). For the list of licensed Chinese medicines traders, please visit the [website of the CMCHK](#).

To enhance the public's understanding of registered pharmacies, the website of the Drug Office of the DH provides educational materials on "['Pharmacies' in Hong Kong](#)" for public viewing. The DH has also compiled safety information for consumers on the purchase and use of medicines, including "[Be Cautious when Buying Medicines on Internet](#)", "[General Knowledge on Registered Medicines](#)", and [points to note when buying proprietary Chinese](#)

[medicines](#) for public viewing.

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## [Appeal for information on missing woman in Sha Tin \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (April 30) appealed to the public for information on a woman who went missing in Sha Tin.

An Indonesian woman, Gimongala Karen Betcher, aged 37, went missing after she left her residence on 6001 Tai Po Road – Sha Tin Section in the small hours on April 17. Police received the report in the afternoon on the same day.

She is about 1.6 metres tall, 54 kilograms in weight and of medium build. She has a round face with yellow complexion and long dark hair.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing woman or may have seen her is urged to contact the Regional Missing Persons Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1173 or email to [rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk](mailto:rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk), or contact any police station.

