

CFS finds suspected forged health certificates

The Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (CFS) has earlier found some discrepancies of the serial numbers of a few health certificates issued by the Vietnamese authorities when processing data during an improvement exercise of the import food information system. The Centre immediately informed the Consulate General of Vietnam in Hong Kong for a follow-up investigation. CFS today (December 12) announced a case of suspected forged health certificates used by a Vietnam meat processing plant for application of import license of frozen pork to Hong Kong upon receiving a notification from the Vietnamese authorities. The Centre has immediately implemented tracing and follow up measures and referred the case to the Hong Kong Police Force for investigation.

The spokesman said, "After an investigation, the Vietnamese authorities informed the Centre today that after reviewing all health certificates submitted to CFS this year, there were a total of 8 forged health certificates identified. All forged health certificates were related to one meat processing plant in Vietnam. The Vietnamese authorities have suspended issuance of health certificate to this plant."

"The investigation of CFS revealed that from May to October this year, there were 8 consignments of frozen pork (weighed 176 tonnes) exported by the concerned meat plant, using high-quality forged health certificates, to 3 local importers. The CFS staff have issued 8 import licenses for meats to the 8 consignments of frozen pork, and later found out the abovementioned problem when processing data of the information system. All the 8 consignments of frozen pork were distributed to other food premises, such as food factories, and tracing work is ongoing. The concerned frozen porks were medium pigs and generally supplied to food factories for preparation of roasted meats."

The spokesman added that in view of the incident, the CFS has instructed the 3 importers to suspend sale and initiate a recall of the concerned products. The lot numbers of the 8 affected consignments of frozen pigs are 230819A6700, 110319A6765, 250419A6779, 220419A6780, 010819A6779, 090919A6700, 261218A6695 and 120819A6500. Trade members who had purchased the affected consignments can call the importers' hotlines, Wealth Fortune Trading Limited and Golden Rainbow Trading Limited at 5408 3322, and Keung Kee Food Trading Co. Ltd at 2694 1662, during office hours for enquiries about the recall. As a precautionary measure, the CFS has immediately suspended import of frozen pork from the Vietnam meat processing plant named "Haiphong Trading Goods Export Joint Stock Company" to Hong Kong. In the meantime, the CFS has enhanced inspection of all health certificates for imported frozen meat issued by Vietnam and will collaborate with the Vietnamese authorities to verify every health certificate submitted before issuance of import license. Currently, Hong Kong and Vietnam has established a meat import arrangement of frozen pork only.

To ensure food sold in Hong Kong is compliant to local regulations and fit for human consumption, the CFS has ongoing food surveillance programme in collecting food samples from import, wholesale and retail level (including pork, beef, poultry meat and its products) for chemical and biological testing. The CFS has collected more than 10 700 samples of pork, beef, poultry meat and its products since 2018 till November this year for chemical and biological testing (including residual veterinary drugs, preservatives and pathogen, etc.), the satisfactory rate was 99.8 per cent. The 25 unsatisfactory samples did not involve frozen meat from Vietnam.

The Vietnamese authorities expressed that they have been conducting regular strict inspections at the concerned processing plant to ensure its environment is clean and the processed meat is fit for human consumption. For the sake of prudence, the Centre will enhance testing of related products imported from Vietnam and CFS staff will take samples of frozen pork from Vietnam at various levels for testing starting from today.

This is the first time in Hong Kong to discover suspected forged health certificates involving the same processing plant in Vietnam. The CFS has requested the Vietnamese authorities to continue in-depth investigation of the incident and provide a prompt investigation results for prevention of future recurrence. The CFS will keep close collaboration with the Vietnamese authorities and the Hong Kong Police Force to follow up the matters and carry out appropriate actions. Investigation is still ongoing.

Given that no unsatisfactory samples of frozen meat imported from Vietnam were discovered under the routine food surveillance programme conducted by CFS, the Centre decided to initiate a confined recall for the abovementioned case.

11th Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum promotes cultural co-operation in Asian economies (with photos)

The highlight of the 11th Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum (ACCF), the Ministerial Panel, was held this morning (December 12). Cultural ministers and senior officials of nine Asian countries came together in Hong Kong to attend the panel discussion session and exchanged ideas and shared views on boosting cultural co-operation to promote the development of culture and the arts.

The Director of the Palace Museum, Dr Wang Xudong, addressed today's panel discussion session while other participating cultural ministers and

senior officials from Singapore, Cambodia, the Maldives, Bangladesh, Korea, Japan, Thailand and Myanmar also took turns to speak. Among the participating countries, the Maldives and Bangladesh have joined the ACCF for the first time. Cultural representatives from Mainland provinces and Macao also attended the panel discussion session.

The ACCF is being held today and tomorrow (December 13) with a wide range of activities. The ACCF was launched in 2003 by the Home Affairs Bureau with an aim of fostering regional cultural co-operation, sharing good practices and promoting culture and the arts.

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, said in his opening speech at the panel discussion session that this year's ACCF marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and reflects Hong Kong's strategic location at the heart of Asia. He pointed out that Hong Kong has been and will continue to be an important place for bringing together cities and countries, providing a hub for different cultures to meet, influence one another and evolve.

Mr Lau added that while Hong Kong has been facing unprecedented difficulties in the past few months, we will remain resilient to overcome all challenges ahead. He expressed the belief that arts and culture transcend boundaries and differences, noting that co-operation and mutual support will always prevail in strengthening people-to-people bonds and building inclusive societies.

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, hosted a Gala Lunch for the delegations and local cultural leaders. This year, performing groups were invited to give performances together with local musicians during the Gala Lunch of the ACCF for the first time, in order to let guests have a taste of the cultures of different places. The performers came from European and Asian cities with vibrant cultural scenes including Yogyakarta, Indonesia; Matera, Italy; and Incheon, Korea.

The Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Cherry Tse, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Co-operation with the Secretary of State, Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia, Mr Som Sokun, with a view to strengthening cultural co-operation and exchanges between Hong Kong and Cambodia.

In the afternoon, the participating delegations visited the Hong Kong Museum of Art, which reopened in November. The delegations will visit the Xiqu Centre and Tai Kwun tomorrow.



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

Police today (December 12) appealed to the public for information on a woman who went missing in Cheung Sha Wan.

ZHANG Xiaoge, aged 34, went missing after she left her residence on Fuk Wing Street on December 9 morning. Her family made a report to Police yesterday (December 11)..

She is about 1.6 metres tall, 72 kilograms in weight and of fat build. She has a round face with yellow complexion and long black hair. She was last seen carrying a black and white bag in unknown clothing.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing woman or may have seen her is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of Kowloon West on 3661 8035 or 9020 6542 or email to rmpu-kw@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



[Hin Tin Swimming Pool reopened](#)

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 (December 12) that Hin Tin Swimming Pool in Sha Tin District, closed earlier on due to water pipe burst in the vicinity, has been reopened.

Missing woman in Tuen Mun located

A woman who went missing in Tuen Mun has been located.

Chan Mei-fong, aged 56, went missing after she left her residence in Sam Shing Estate in the small hours on December 7. Her family made a report to Police on December 8.

The woman was located at a bus stop near Tuen Mun Pier this afternoon (December 12). She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.