

Hong Kong Customs consecutively seizes suspected illegally imported medicines at Lok Ma Chau Control Point in one week (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs in the past week consecutively seized multiple batches of medicines suspected of being imported not under and in accordance with a valid import licence at Lok Ma Chau Control Point. The medicines had an estimated market value of about \$6.41 million in total. Seven drivers and five consignees were arrested.

In the above cases, Customs seized a total of 11 types of suspected illegally imported medicines, including 11 270 400 laxative tablets, 100 020 tablets of analgesic drugs, 9 240 flu medicine tablets, 6 000 gastrointestinal medicine tablets, 173 012 pieces of analgesic patches, 130 768 bags of flu granules, 420 litres of liquid nasal sprays, 10L of antifungal drugs, 63 kilograms of stomachic powder, 8.5kg of allergic rhinitis drugs and six bottles of cigarette oil containing nicotine.

On September 22, Customs officers seized 57 cartons of suspected illegally imported laxative tablets and stomachic powder with an estimated market value of about \$680,000 on board an incoming lorry.

Later, on September 25, two incoming lorries were intercepted and 31 cartons of suspected illegally imported medicines, including flu medicines and nicotine-containing cigarette oil, with an estimated market value of about \$330,000 were seized.

Last Sunday (September 27), Customs intercepted two incoming lorries and further seized suspected illegally imported analgesic patches and laxatives tablets worth about \$2.2 million.

Yesterday (September 29), Customs further seized a large batch of suspected illegally imported medicines, including analgesic drugs, analgesic patches, liquid nasal sprays, allergic rhinitis drugs, flu granules, flu medicines, gastrointestinal medicines, laxative tablets and antifungal drugs with an estimated market value of about \$3.2 million, from two incoming lorries.

Seven lorry drivers, aged between 47 and 58, were arrested at the control point during the operations conducted on the four days.

Apart from the drivers involved, Customs further arrested five consignees aged between 28 and 48, including a male director of a trading company, after follow-up investigations.

The 12 arrested persons, comprising nine men and three women, have been

released on bail pending further investigation. Customs will not rule out the likelihood of further arrests.

Investigations on the cases are ongoing.

Under the Import and Export Ordinance (IEO), any person who imports pharmaceutical products and medicines without a valid import licence commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violation of the IEO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

