

Hong Kong resident jailed for conspiracy to defraud

A Hong Kong resident charged with one count of conspiracy to defraud was convicted and sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment at Sha Tin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (August 15).

During the investigation on a case of a suspected bogus marriage by the Special Investigation Section of the Immigration Department (ImmD), the 63-year-old defendant was suspected to have contracted a bogus marriage with a Mainland resident. The defendant under caution admitted that under the arrangement of a middleman, she was paid \$50,000 as a monetary reward to contract a bogus marriage with the Mainland resident.

"The ImmD will continue to spare no effort in combating bogus marriages and related fraud activities of non-local residents. For people who have obtained their residency in Hong Kong by fraudulent means, their residence status and Hong Kong identity card will be invalidated according to the laws of Hong Kong. They will also be subject to removal back to their place of origin. Persons should not defy the law by participating in activities related to bogus marriages anywhere," the spokesman said.

"Anyone who commits the offence of conspiracy to defraud is liable, upon conviction, to imprisonment for 14 years. According to section 42 of the Immigration Ordinance, any person who makes any statement or representation which he knows to be false or does not believe to be true to immigration officers commits an offence. Offenders are liable to prosecution, and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$150,000 and imprisonment for 14 years. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and the same penalties. Any person who for the purpose of procuring a marriage, or a certificate or license for marriage, knowingly and wilfully makes a false oath or makes or signs a false declaration is guilty of an offence and is liable, upon conviction, to imprisonment for seven years and to a fine," the spokesman warned.