

# Immigration Department combats Mainland visitors abusing transit arrangement for holders of PRC passports

Two Mainland visitors were convicted of making false representation to Immigration Officers and jailed at Shatin Magistrates' Courts on January 11 and today (January 18).

The two Mainland visitors comprised one man and one woman aged 28 and 21 respectively. They were arrested in an operation codenamed "Breakshadow" by the Immigration Department (ImmD) on January 9. The operation tackled abuses by Mainland visitors of the existing transit arrangement for holders of People's Republic of China (PRC) passports. Upon arrival for immigration clearance at Lo Wu Control Point and Shenzhen Bay Control Point respectively, the two Mainland visitors falsely told Immigration Officers that they were transiting through Hong Kong to other countries. The ImmD officer found that their onward flight tickets were invalid and therefore arrested them. Upon further investigation, they admitted that their actual purpose of visit was not to transit via Hong Kong to other countries but sightseeing in Hong Kong.

The two arrested Mainland visitors were charged with making false representation to Immigration Officers. They pleaded guilty and were sentenced to three months' and four months' imprisonment respectively.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, under the laws of Hong Kong, any person who makes false representation to an Immigration Officer commits an offence. Offenders are liable to prosecution and, upon conviction, the maximum penalty will be a fine of \$150,000 and imprisonment for 14 years. In addition, if Mainland visitors abuse the existing transit arrangement for holders of PRC passports by not departing for other countries or territories according to their original itinerary, relevant information will be recorded by the ImmD. Upon their next arrival, ImmD officers at control points will conduct detailed examination before a decision to grant or refuse permission to land is made.