

## **EMSD announces latest sampling results for legionella at fresh water cooling towers**

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) today (July 9) announced that the department tested 82 water samples collected from cooling towers in 76 buildings in its routine inspections in June this year. Two samples were detected to have a total legionella count at or above the upper threshold, which is 1 000 colony-forming units per millilitre. The latest statistics are set out in Annex 1.

The cooling towers in which the two samples were collected in June are located at Shing Chuen Industrial Building, 25-27 Shing Wan Road, Sha Tin, and Hilton Plaza, 3-9 Sha Tin Centre Street, Sha Tin. The EMSD has issued nuisance notices under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance to the owners of the cooling towers requiring appropriate disinfection work to be done. Disinfection of the cooling towers in these two cases has already been completed by the owners. Details of these two cases can be found in Annex 2. The EMSD publishes the latest statistics of the above information on a half-monthly basis on its website ([www.emsd.gov.hk/en/other\\_regulatory\\_services/cooling\\_towers/water\\_sampling/index.html#ct-stat](http://www.emsd.gov.hk/en/other_regulatory_services/cooling_towers/water_sampling/index.html#ct-stat)).

The EMSD reminds the owners of fresh water cooling towers that they have the responsibility to design, operate and maintain cooling towers properly. They should arrange regular inspections, timely maintenance and periodic testing of the water quality in their cooling towers in accordance with the Code of Practice for Fresh Water Cooling Towers issued by the department to prevent the proliferation of legionella.

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## **Transcript of remarks by FS**

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at a media session after attending the listing ceremony of Xiaomi Corporation at the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited this morning (July 9):

Reporter: Do you think the lukewarm performance of Xiaomi will affect the pricing and valuation of other upcoming IPOs (initial public offerings)?

Financial Secretary: There are quite a number of other companies in the pipeline seeking to be listed on the Stock Exchange. As you know recently the stock market has been affected by the sentiments arising from the trade

conflict between China and United States. This is still developing. It is hard to estimate at this stage the impact on the stock market. We will continue to monitor this process. In the meantime, I don't think we need to be over worried.

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

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## Three illegal workers jailed

Three illegal workers, comprising an Indian, a Thai and a Vietnamese holding recognisance forms, were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts on July 6.

Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators received a referral from the Hong Kong Police Force to further investigate an illegal employment case in May. Enforcement officers arrested a male Indian worker, aged 25, who was found doing renovation work in a shop in Yuen Long. Upon identity checking, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant.

Furthermore, during operation "Twilight" conducted on July 3, ImmD

investigators raided a restaurant in Tsuen Wan. A male Thai illegal worker and a male Vietnamese illegal worker, aged 32 and 44, were arrested. When intercepted they were cooking and doing cleaning work respectively. Upon identity checking, they produced for inspection recognisance forms issued by the ImmD, which prohibit them from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that they were non-refoulement claimants. In addition, one of them was also suspected of using and being in possession of a forged identity card. Two employers suspected of employing the illegal workers were arrested and the investigations are ongoing.

The three illegal workers were charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts on July 6 with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. They pleaded guilty to the charges and were sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. In addition, one of them was also charged with using a forged Hong Kong identity card and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. All sentences are to run concurrently, making a total of 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman also warned that it is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or an identity card relating to other person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure,

conduct initial screening on vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation, with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

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