

18 persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations (with photo)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a series of territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations codenamed "Twilight" and joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion" for three consecutive days from October 24 to yesterday (October 26). A total of 10 suspected illegal workers, three suspected employers and five overstayers were arrested.

During the anti-illegal worker operations, ImmD Task Force officers raided 17 target locations including industrial buildings, residential buildings, restaurants and retail shops. Five suspected illegal workers and three suspected employers were arrested. The arrested suspected illegal workers comprised one man and four women, aged 37 to 46. Among them, one woman was a holder of a recognisance form, which prohibits her from taking any employment. Two men and one woman, aged 35 to 54, were suspected of employing the illegal workers and were also arrested.

During operation "Champion", enforcement officers raided 52 target locations in New Territories North region and Western district, including recycling yards and warehouses. Five suspected illegal workers and five overstayers were arrested. The arrested suspected illegal workers comprised four men and one woman, aged 32 to 64. Three male and two female overstayers, aged 34 to 46, were arrested.

An ImmD spokesman said, "Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him or her shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties."

The spokesman warned, "As stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, an illegal immigrant, a person who is the subject of a removal order or a deportation order, an overstayer or a person who was refused permission to land is 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 spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. Under the Immigration Ordinance, the maximum penalty for an employer employing a person who is not lawfully employable, i.e. an illegal immigrant, a person who is the subject of a removal order or a deportation order, an overstayer or a person who was refused permission to land, has been significantly increased from a fine of \$350,000 and three years' imprisonment to a fine of \$500,000 and 10 years' imprisonment to reflect the gravity of such offences. The director, manager, secretary, partner, etc, of the company concerned may also bear criminal liability. 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. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$150,000 and to imprisonment for one year. In that connection, the spokesman would like to remind all employers not to defy the law by employing illegal workers. The ImmD will continue to take resolute enforcement action to combat such offences.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct an initial screening of 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 ImmD officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threats 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 intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter or temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments immediately.



[Update on dengue fever](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today

(October 27) reported the latest number of dengue fever (DF) cases, and urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From October 20 to yesterday (October 26), the CHP recorded three imported DF cases. The patients had been to the Maldives, Taiwan and Nepal respectively during the incubation periods.

As of yesterday, 43 imported cases of DF had been recorded in 2023. In 2022, 26 imported cases of DF were recorded.

The latest surveillance data shows that there is an increase in DF cases noted in some places in Asia (such as Bangladesh, Malaysia, Taiwan and Thailand) compared to the same period last year. Members of the public, while travelling abroad, should stay vigilant and carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures. Detailed information on the latest DF situation in Hong Kong, as well as neighbouring and overseas countries and areas, has been uploaded to the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df_imported_cases_and_overseas_figures_eng.pdf).

"Apart from general measures, travellers returning from areas affected by DF should apply insect repellent for 14 days upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent

for children*;

- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

â€‹The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the following pages for more information: the DF page of the [CHP](#) and the [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), and the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected heroin worth about \\$12 million \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs on October 18 seized about 13.5 kilograms of suspected heroin with an estimated market value of about \$12 million at the Tsing Yi Customs Cargo Examination Compound.

Through risk assessment, Customs on that day inspected a seaborne consignment, declared as carrying groceries and arriving in Hong Kong from Thailand, at the Tsing Yi Customs Cargo Examination Compound. Upon inspection, the batch of suspected heroin was found inside 12 carton boxes.

After a follow-up investigation and a controlled delivery operation, Customs officers on the same day arrested two local men and one woman aged between 36 and 55 in Kwai Chung and Kowloon City, who were suspected to be connected with the case.

An investigation is ongoing. The three arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs will continue to enhance enforcement against drug trafficking activities through intelligence analysis. The department also reminds members of the public to stay alert and not to participate in drug trafficking activities for monetary returns. They must not accept hiring or delegation from another party to carry controlled items into and out of Hong Kong. They are also reminded not to carry unknown items for other people, nor to release their personal data or home address to others for receiving parcels or goods.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).



[Fraudulent websites and internet banking login screens related to Bank of China \(Hong Kong\) Limited](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited relating to fraudulent websites and internet banking login screens, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the websites or login screens concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong

[Over 140 participants from 15 cities attend C40 Climate Action Seminar in Hong Kong \(with photos\)](#)

The C40 Climate Action Seminar (Asian and Oceania Regions) was held today (October 27) at the AsiaWorld-Expo. Organised by the Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB), it brought together representatives from 15 C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) cities in Asian and Oceania Regions to share the cities' climate action, including the promotion of green transport and infrastructure, and the development of green economy and finance. Including representatives from local organisations, the seminar was well attended by over 140 participants.

Speaking at the seminar, the Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, said, "While the three years of the pandemic have made in-person exchange with our fellow C40 cities representatives much more challenging, such difficult times have not impeded our quest for carbon neutrality. During the pandemic in 2021, we promulgated Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 that would lead Hong Kong towards the goal of carbon neutrality before 2050."

Hong Kong's climate strategies embrace all the key components of climate action planning advocated by the C40, namely emissions neutrality, resilience to climate hazards, inclusivity and benefits, as well as governance and collaboration. Noting the urgent need to achieve emissions neutrality and having regard to the decarbonisation potential of hydrogen fuel, Mr Tse said, "As announced in 'The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address', we will publish the Strategy of Hydrogen Development in Hong Kong in the first half of 2024 to support the exploration of hydrogen application in different fields, including electricity generation and storage, construction equipment and machineries, as well as transport, which offers an exciting opportunity to demonstrate the role of hydrogen in driving a low-carbon transition."

Other speakers at the seminar included the Secretary General of the Executive Council of Dubai, Mr Abdulla Mohammed Al Basti; the Lead Climate Mitigation Advisor of Auckland Council, Mr Adrien Bouzonville; Consultant for the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Mr Hridbijoy Chakraborty; Deputy Director of the Development and Reform Commission of Shenzhen Municipality Mr Li Baozhao; Deputy Director of the Beijing Climate Change Management Center Ms Yu Fengju; the President of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, Dr Barry Lee; and the Head (Market Development) of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, Ms Georgina Lok.

Established in 2005, C40 is a global network of mayors committed to connecting cities around the world to take urgent action to confront the climate crisis. Hong Kong became a member city in 2007. Currently, the Secretary for Environment and Ecology is a member of the C40 Steering Committee representing the Central East Asia Region, which includes 13 Chinese cities.

The seminar is a concurrent event of the Eco Expo Asia 2023, which is held from October 26 to 29. Organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd, and co-organised by the EEB, the Eco Expo Asia is an annual exhibition and conference that showcases global green solutions, technologies, services, and products while promoting international collaborations on environmental protection.

