

Public reminded to keep venues clean during drone show

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (May 24) appealed to members of the public to keep venues clean and mind their safety while watching the drone show at the Avenue of Stars, Tsim Sha Tsui, tomorrow (May 25).

The LCSD, together with the law enforcement teams of other relevant departments, will strengthen patrols at the Avenue of Stars where large crowds are expected. Measures will be stepped up to tackle littering, illegal hawking and vandalism.

A spokesman for the LCSD warned that littering offenders will be subject to a fixed penalty of \$3,000.

Bus Safety Excellence Award Ceremony 2024 held today (with photos)

The Transport Department (TD) today (May 24) held the Bus Safety Excellence Award Ceremony 2024 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai to commend the dedication and diligence of the staff of the franchised bus companies who strive to enhance bus safety in their daily operations.

Speaking at the award ceremony, the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan, expressed appreciation for the dedication of these unsung heroes of the franchised bus companies – bus captains, driving instructors, inspectors, regulators, depot engineers and mechanics – who spare no effort every day to ensure efficient bus services and safe journeys for millions of passengers. She further encouraged all the staff of the bus companies to continue their concerted effort to enhance bus safety.

A total of 58 employees received the Bus Safety Excellence Award in four categories, comprising 28 bus captains, six driving instructors, 12 inspectors/regulators and 12 awardees from four teams of engineers/mechanics. Each franchised bus company recommended the awardees to the TD based on their safety record performances throughout the past year. These performances need to meet the criteria set by the TD, such as no driving accidents and no driving offence records maintained by the bus captains, the provision of clear and understandable safety trainings by the driving instructors to their

bus captains, and the efficient management of daily operations by the inspectors/regulators, as well as the use of creativity and technology by the teams of engineers/mechanics to enhance bus safety.

The TD and the franchised bus companies have been strengthening bus captains' training and crisis awareness. Bus captains are regularly reminded of the importance of careful and attentive driving at all times. In addition to the co-operation of bus passengers and other road users, safe and reliable bus services also depend on the efforts and contributions of the franchised bus companies' dedicated and professional staff.

Other officiating guests at the award ceremony included the Commissioner for Transport, Ms Angela Lee; the Chairman of the Transport Advisory Committee, Professor Stephen Cheung; the Chairman of the Legislative Council Panel on Transport, Mr Chan Han-pan; Member of the Legislative Council for the Transport Functional Constituency, Mr Frankie Yick; and the Chief Superintendent of Police (Traffic) of the Hong Kong Police Force, Mr Chan Siu-ming.

The list of awardees is provided in the Annex.



Pharmacy and its staff member fined for selling COVID-19 oral drugs with false trade descriptions applied

A pharmacy and its sales personnel were fined \$50,000 and \$22,000 respectively today (May 24) by the Fanling Magistrates' Courts after being convicted of possessing and selling COVID-19 oral drugs with false descriptions of composition, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO) and the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance.

Hong Kong Customs earlier received four cases referred by the Department of Health regarding suspected supply of COVID-19 oral drugs with false claims of composition. After investigation, enforcement actions were taken in June 2023 and a number of persons involved in the cases, including pharmacy staff, were arrested across different districts in Hong Kong.

The persons and the pharmacy involved in three of the cases had been found guilty at the Kwun Tong, Eastern, and Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts for violating the above two Ordinances. They were sentenced to a fine from \$3,000 to \$7,000, a community service order for 160 hours, and imprisonment for seven weeks to five months, for each offence respectively.

Customs welcomes the sentences for the above four cases. They have imposed a deterrent effect and reflect the seriousness of the offences. A clear warning has also been delivered to unscrupulous practitioners.

Customs will continue to take stringent law enforcement action and maintain close contact with relevant government departments and organisations, as well as monitoring the market situation regularly, with a view to combating false trade descriptions activities.

Customs reminds traders that selling medicine with false trade descriptions applied is a serious crime and offenders face criminal liability. Consumers are also reminded to purchase goods at reputable shops and to check with the professionals if the authenticity of a product is in doubt.

Under the TDO, any person who sells or possesses for sale any goods with false trade descriptions applied commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses any poison included in Part 1 of the Poisons List or unregistered pharmaceutical products other than in accordance with provisions commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TDO 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).

[Nine persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations \(with photo\)](#)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a series of territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations and joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion" and "Windsand" for four consecutive days from May 20 to yesterday (May 23). A total of eight suspected illegal workers and one suspected employer were arrested.

During the anti-illegal worker operations, ImmD Task Force officers raided 165 target locations including massage parlours, premises under renovation and restaurants. Seven suspected illegal workers and one suspected employer were arrested. The arrested suspected illegal workers comprised four men and three women, aged 31 to 52. One woman, aged 47, who was suspected of employing the illegal workers, was arrested.

During operation "Champion", enforcement officers raided 15 target locations in Central district. One female suspected illegal worker, aged 62, was 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 (May 24) 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 May 17 to yesterday (May 23), the CHP recorded one imported DF case. The patient had been to Singapore during the incubation period.

As of yesterday, 24 cases of DF, including 23 imported and one local cases, had been recorded in 2024. In 2023, 62 imported cases of DF were recorded.

According to the World Health Organization, the global incidence of DF has markedly increased over the past two decades, posing a substantial public health challenge. In 2023, ongoing transmission, combined with an unexpected spike in DF cases, had resulted in close to a historic high of over 5 million cases and more than 5 000 dengue-related deaths reported in over 80 countries/territories. The latest surveillance data shows that there is an increase in DF cases noted in some places in Asia (such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand) compared to the same period last year. Since the beginning of 2024, the Americas, including Brazil, Argentina and Peru, have recorded over 7 million cases, a record number. 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 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 a 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
- Reapply 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](#).