

Appeal for information on missing man in Sha Tin (with photos)

Police today (December 13) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Sha Tin.

Yau Hoi, aged 70, went missing after he was last seen at the platform of Ho Chuen House, Shui Chuen O Estate this morning. His family then made a report to Police.

He is about 1.7 metres tall, 78 kilograms in weight and of normal build. He has a square face with yellow complexion and short black hair. He was last seen wearing an orange long-sleeved shirt, a black vest jacket, black trousers and white slippers.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Persons Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1173 or 5217 5562 or email to rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



Committee on Education, Technology and Talents convenes first meeting (with photos)

The Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address the

establishment of the Committee on Education, Technology and Talents. The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, chaired the first meeting today (December 13). The Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin; the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong; the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, and Permanent Secretaries or representatives of the three bureaux attended the meeting.

In the meeting, the Committee discussed the work plan on promoting Hong Kong into an international hub for high-calibre talent, targeting the manpower demand of Hong Kong's strategic positioning of "eight centres". The Committee will adopt the following three major strategic directions to enhance the system, aggregation and synergy of policies, as well as the cross-bureaux co-ordination in the work on promoting integrated development of education, technology, and talent:

(1) Attract high-quality innovation and technology (I&T) talent, lead the I&T sector in revamping its positioning and planning, and develop into an international I&T hub linking the Mainland and the rest of the world by leveraging the development of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (Hetao Co-operation Zone);

(2) Establish an international education hub to build and promote the "Study in Hong Kong" brand, provide talent support for "eight centres" as well as technologies and innovations; and

(3) Enhance talent admission schemes and talent services in accordance with the changes brought about by the strategic positioning of industries in Hong Kong, attract I&T and leading talent that are conducive to the development of the country, as well as resolving issues supporting the education of children of incoming talent.

The Committee agreed to focus on following up and implementing these key areas of work in the coming year, with a view to enhancing the system interface in the short term:

- enhance the General Employment Policy and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals by allowing a specified number of young and experienced non-degree talent with relevant professional and technical skills to apply for entry into Hong Kong to join the skilled trades facing acute manpower shortage;
- introduce a mechanism under the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme to actively invite top-notch talent to come to Hong Kong for development and promote Hong Kong as the focal point of international high-calibre talent;
- review the Technology Talent Admission Scheme to tie in with the I&T development of Hong Kong;
- seize the opportunity brought by the commencement of operation of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Co-operation Zone next year, and leverage various initiatives conducive to the development of upstream, midstream and downstream sectors of the I&T ecosystem to fully realise the notion

- of attracting talent with industries; and
- review the prevailing Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates and education matters of dependents who are children of incoming talent through talent admission schemes.

Mr Chan said, "In formulating the macro policy directions for education, technology and talent, the Committee will build on the strategic positioning and advantages of the "eight centres" and make holistic plans to strategise talent chains, innovation chains, industrial chains and capital chains to drive technological innovation, industrial innovation and the co-ordinated development of human resource supply and demand, while flexibly introducing and gathering specialised talent of various sectors to build an international hub for high-calibre talent for contributing to the high-quality development of Hong Kong and the country and accelerating the advancement of Chinese modernisation."

The terms of reference and membership of the Committee are set out in the Annex.



[Update on cluster of Candida auris cases in Kowloon Hospital](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement on Candida auris carrier cases, the spokesperson for Kowloon Hospital gave the following update today (December 13):

Following a contact tracing investigation, one more patient, a male aged 71 in the respiratory medicine ward, was identified as a carrier of Candida auris while not having signs of infection. The patient is currently hospitalised at Queen Elizabeth Hospital for other medical needs. He is being treated in isolation and is in stable condition.

The hospital will continue the contact tracing investigation of close

contacts of the patients in accordance with the prevailing guidelines. A series of enhanced infection control measures have already been adopted to prevent the spread of *Candida auris*:

1. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of the ward concerned;
2. Enhanced admission screening for patients and environmental screening procedures; and
3. Application of stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene of staff and patients.

The case has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health for necessary follow-up.

[CHP investigates two food poisoning clusters](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (December 13) investigating two epidemiologically linked food poisoning clusters affecting eight persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent foodborne diseases.

The first cluster involved one male and one female aged 47 and 69 respectively, who developed abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea about 30 to 36 hours after having a buffet lunch at The Promenade at Harbour Grand Kowloon located in Hung Hom on December 7.

The second cluster involved two males and four females aged between 26 and 60, who developed abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and fever about 30 to 46 hours after having a buffet lunch at the same restaurant on December 9.

Seven of the affected persons sought medical advice. None required hospitalisation.

Initial investigations by the CHP revealed that the affected persons had consumed common food including raw oysters. The incident might have been caused by norovirus.

Personnel from the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department have conducted an inspection at the restaurant, took food samples for laboratory testing, and instructed the premises concerned to suspend serving incriminated food items with immediate effect and carry out cleaning and disinfection of the premises. The officers

have also provided health education related to food safety and environmental hygiene to the staff of the premises.

The CHP and CFS's investigation is ongoing, and it cannot be ruled out that the number of cases will increase. The CHP appeals to persons who have buffet at the aforementioned restaurant between December 7 and 9 to seek medical advice as soon as possible if they feel unwell.

To prevent foodborne diseases, members of the public are reminded to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times. When dining out, one should:

- Avoid eating raw seafood;
- Be a discerning consumer in choosing cold dishes, including sashimi, sushi and raw oysters at a buffet;
- Choose pasteurised eggs, egg products or dried egg powder for dishes that often use lightly cooked or uncooked eggs;
- Patronise only reliable and licensed restaurants;
- Store and reheat pre-cooked or leftover foods properly before consumption;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hotpot or barbecue meal;
- Handle raw and cooked foods carefully and separate them completely during the cooking process;
- Use two sets of chopsticks and utensils to handle raw and cooked foods;
- Avoid patronising illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Refrain from trying to use salt, vinegar, wine or wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.

[Drug abuse and drug situation in Hong Kong in first three quarters of 2024](#)

â€‹The Action Committee Against Narcotics (ACAN) noted at its meeting today (December 13) the statistical figures of the Central Registry of Drug Abuse (CRDA) and other drug-related figures in the first three quarters of 2024. ACAN noticed that the total number of reported drug abusers in the first three quarters of 2024 was lower than that for the first three quarters in 2023, whereas the number of reported young drug abusers aged under 21 increased. ACAN will closely monitor the situation in the remaining quarter of 2024, and will carry out anti-drug work according to the latest situation.

Figures from the CRDA revealed that the total number of reported drug

abusers in the first three quarters of 2024 decreased by 9 per cent (from 4 485 to 4 082) when compared with that of 2023. The three most common types of drugs abused in the first three quarters of 2024 were heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine (commonly known as "Ice"). Nevertheless, the number of reported young drug abusers aged under 21 in the first three quarters of 2024 increased from 538 to 593 when compared with the same period last year. Among these reported young drug abusers, 139 of them abused "space oil". In this group, the most common type of drugs abused was cannabis, followed by cocaine. Since the first half of 2024, "space oil" has continued to be the third most common type of drugs abused by young drug abusers aged under 21.

The Chairman of ACAN, Dr Donald Li, said "Without a doubt, vaping 'space oil' by e-cigarettes is the same as taking drugs. The abuse of etomidate, the main ingredient of 'space oil', could lead to addiction, memory loss, seizure, unconsciousness, and even death."

Dr Li reminds the public that they should never try "space oil" out of curiosity. It will cost one's health and career. He also called on the education and social welfare sectors to be vigilant about several signs of young people in the hope that early intervention can prevent the abuse situation from getting worse. These signs include possession of suspected e-cigarette products, and display of a vacant expression, an unsteady gait, unexplained bruises, etc.

Dr Li continued, "The Government has made it clear that it will step up the control of etomidate by amending the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance in the first quarter of next year. I welcome this initiative. No member of our society can get away from the problem of emerging drugs. We must take action by working together so that our younger generation would not fall prey to this new drug."

The Narcotics Division (ND) of the Security Bureau is highly concerned about the abuse of "space oil". It has adopted the suggestions from ACAN and launched education and publicity initiatives targeting "space oil" to enhance the public's abilities to protect themselves against this emerging drug. In the second half of this year, the ND co-organised multiple exchange sessions with the Hospital Authority, social welfare service organisations and relevant government offices to help frontline social workers and teaching staff exercise extra vigilance against "space oil", and improve their capabilities for providing services to "space oil" abusers.

The ND and ACAN will launch a new TV Announcement in the Public Interest (API) on the theme of saying no to "space oil" abuse this month. Apart from this API, the ND will also broadcast a series of feature stories about "space oil". Through interviews with people from different sectors, including former drug abusers, professional social workers and a psychiatrist, these feature stories discuss the factors behind "space oil" abuse, the harmful effects caused by this new drug, the common misconceptions about "space oil" and the importance of promptly listing etomidate as a dangerous drug to protect the public from its abuse. Citizens are welcome to visit the ND's "space oil" dedicated webpage (www.nd.gov.hk/tc/space_oil.html), which contains a "space

oil"-themed animated video and relevant information.

According to the statistical figures from the law enforcement agencies, the number of persons arrested for drug offences in the first three quarters of 2024 dropped by 9 per cent (from 2 615 to 2 386) when compared with that of 2023. The number of young arrestees aged under 21 decreased by 20 per cent (from 246 to 196). Cannabis, cocaine and methamphetamine were the main drugs involved in these arrests. According to the court cases concluded for the same period, the conviction rate of persons being prosecuted for drug offences was as high as nearly 90 per cent. As for young offenders aged under 21 who were sentenced to imprisonment for drug trafficking, more than half of them were sentenced to over five years in prison, and the longest period of imprisonment was 22 years. The ND reminds young people to remain vigilant against drugs when attending gatherings or travelling abroad during the long holidays in December. Never try drugs out of curiosity and never take part in drug trafficking activities out of greed. Otherwise, there will be lifelong regrets. Young age is not a valid mitigating factor. Anyone who commits a drug offence is liable for serious criminal punishment. The maximum penalty for drug trafficking is life imprisonment and a fine of \$5 million.

In addition, the ND reminds members of the public again that cannabidiol (CBD) has been listed as a dangerous drug since February 1, 2023. When travelling outside Hong Kong, members of the public need to stay vigilant and avoid purchasing products containing CBD. Food and drinks, or even health supplements, skincare products (such as facial masks, massage oils), etc, may also contain CBD. No product containing CBD, regardless of its concentration, is allowed into Hong Kong.

The statistical figures of the CRDA for the first three quarters of 2024 are available on the website of the ND (www.nd.gov.hk/en/crda_main_charts_and_tables.html). The ND's website (www.nd.gov.hk) as well as its official accounts (narcotics.divisionhk) on Facebook and Instagram also contain detailed information about drugs, including frequently asked questions about "space oil", cocaine and cannabis for the public's reference. If members of the public encounter any drug problems, they can send messages to 98 186 186 on instant messaging applications WhatsApp and WeChat, or call the 24-hour hotline 186 186 to seek information or assistance from professional social workers.