

## Hong Kong Customs detects smuggling case involving about \$20 million of goods by river trade vessel (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs on April 2 detected a suspected smuggling case involving a river trade vessel. A large batch of suspected smuggled goods with a total estimated market value of about \$20 million was seized.

Through intelligence analysis and risk assessment, Customs suspected that criminals were using river trade vessels to smuggle goods to Macao and thus formulated strategies to combat related activities. During the operation, a river trade vessel departing from Hong Kong and bound for Macao was selected for inspection on April 2. Upon examination, Customs officers onboard the vessel found large batches of suspected smuggled goods, including beauty needles, health products and pharmaceutical products.

An investigation is ongoing.

Being a government department primarily responsible for tackling smuggling activities, Customs has all along been combating various smuggling activities at the forefront. Customs will keep up its enforcement action and continue to fiercely combat sea smuggling activities through proactive risk management and intelligence-based enforcement strategies, along with mounting targeted anti-smuggling operations at suitable times to land a solid blow against relevant activities.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

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



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## [Fraudulent website and internet banking login screen related to Airstar Bank 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 Airstar Bank Limited relating to a fraudulent website and an internet banking login screen, 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 website or login screen 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 Police Force at 2860 5012.

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## [Online enrolment for EKCC's interactive immersive experience "Around the Corner" to start from April 15](#)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department will present an interactive immersive experience "Around the Corner" at The Corner, an indoor space on the ground floor of the East Kowloon Cultural Centre (EKCC), from April 22 to July 30. Admission is free. Online enrolment for free admission will be available from 10am on April 15 (Monday).

As an incubator for the development of arts and technology, the EKCC is committed to promoting arts technology, identifying new emerging trends in the arts, and seizing the opportunities that come with innovation and technology. "Around the Corner" is the first community engagement programme organised at the EKCC. The programme, created by arts group XRT, makes use of arts technology to narrate the past of the Kowloon East neighbourhood. Through sounds and images, participants can revisit the community's lives in the past and present in Kowloon East and explore the connection between the two during the process.

Each session of "Around the Corner" is about 30 minutes long and with a quota of 15 participants for a better audience experience. Online enrolment for the programme will start from 10am on April 15 for the first week's timeslots from April 22 to 28, and from 10am on every Monday for the following week thereafter. Each email address can be used to enrol for a maximum of four visitors in the same session.

Visitors who have successfully made a reservation should arrive at the venue 10 minutes prior to their chosen time slot and present the QR code in the confirmation email to staff on-site for free admission. All remaining quotas will be released to walk-in participants 15 minutes before the start of each session. Members of the public can register on the programme website ([www.ekcc.hk/around\\_the\\_corner](http://www.ekcc.hk/around_the_corner)). "Around the Corner" will be closed for maintenance every Wednesday, except for public holidays, and on May 2 and 16.

XRT is a Hong Kong-based forward-thinking collective dedicated to

pushing the boundaries of technology and art fusion, providing invaluable artistic experiences.

For more information on "Around the Corner", please visit the above-mentioned programme website.

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## **Statistics on Code on Access to Information for third quarter of 2023**

The Government received a total of 3 220 requests for information under the Code on Access to Information in the third quarter of 2023, a spokesman for the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau said today (April 12).

The total number of requests received since the introduction of the Code in March 1995 and up to the end of September 2023 amounted to 119 421. Of these, 7 103 requests were subsequently withdrawn by the requestors and 5 949 requests covered cases in which the bureaux/departments concerned did not hold the requested information or cannot confirm or deny the existence of information. As at September 30, 2023, 653 requests were still being processed by bureaux/departments.

Among the 105 716 requests which covered information held by bureaux/departments and which the bureaux/departments had responded to, 102 591 requests (97 per cent) were met, either in full (99 757 requests) or in part (2 834 requests), and 3 125 requests (3 per cent) were refused.

Any member of the public who is dissatisfied with the response of a bureau/department under the Code may request that the matter be reviewed. He or she may also lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman.

In the third quarter of 2023, the Ombudsman received 13 complaints relating to requests for information. In this quarter, the Ombudsman concluded 14 complaints, among which one was partially substantiated, 12 were concluded by inquiries (including three cases with inadequacies found), and one was assessed and closed. As at September 30, 2023, the Ombudsman's investigations on 16 complaints were ongoing.

"The Code has provided an effective framework for the public to seek access to information held by the Government," the spokesman said.

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# CFS announces test results of targeted surveillance on nutrition labelling of prepackaged fruit jam

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (April 12) released the test results of a targeted food surveillance project on the nutrition labelling of prepackaged fruit jam. Among 40 samples tested, six samples were found with energy, protein, carbohydrates or sodium content inconsistent with the declared values on their nutrition labels, while one sample was found with the functional class and the name of an additive not properly declared on the food label. The remaining 33 samples passed the test.

"The CFS collected samples from different retail outlets for the targeted food surveillance project. Tests were conducted to check if the energy content and specified nutrient content (total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugars, sodium, protein, carbohydrates, and more) are consistent with the declared values on their nutrition labels. Results show that the actual nutrient contents of six fruit jam samples were inconsistent with the declared values on the nutrition labels, while one sample was found with the functional class and the name of an additive not properly declared on the food label," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The CFS has announced the irregularities not in compliance with nutrition label rules earlier. The vendors concerned have also stopped selling the relevant batch of the affected products. Prosecution will be instituted should there be sufficient evidence.

The Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W) require all applicable prepackaged foods to list the ingredients and the content of energy plus seven core nutrients, namely carbohydrates, protein, total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and sugars, and regulate any associated nutrition claims. For all prepackaged food for sale in Hong Kong containing additives, the functional class and the name of the additives shall be specified in the list of ingredients in the manner prescribed by the Regulations.

Nutrition labelling can assist consumers in making informed food choices, encourage food manufacturers to apply sound nutrition principles in the formulation of foods, and regulate misleading or deceptive labels and claims. According to Section 61 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132), if any person falsely describes food or misleads as to the nature, substance or quality of the food on a label of the food sold by him or her, he or she shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.

The CFS will continue to conduct surveillance on other food samples to check if their energy content and specified nutrient content are consistent

with the declared values on their nutrition labels, and the results will be released in due course. The spokesman reminded the food trade to comply with the law, and urged members of the public to pay attention to the information on nutrition labels when purchasing food to make informed food choices so as to achieve a balanced diet and stay healthy.