

[Hong Kong Customs detects suspected gold-smuggling case by air worth about \\$84 million \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs on March 27 detected a suspected case of large-scale gold smuggling involving air freight, and seized about 146 kilograms of suspected gold with an estimated market value of about \$84 million, at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA). This is the largest gold-smuggling case detected by Hong Kong Customs on record in terms of the seizure value.

Based on risk assessment, Customs on that day examined an outbound air cargo consignment, declared as carrying two air compressors departing for Japan, at the Customs Cargo Examination Compound at HKIA. Upon inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected smuggled gold, which was moulded and camouflaged as air compressor parts, concealed in the integral parts of the two air compressors.

After a follow-up investigation, Customs officers on April 3 arrested a 31-year-old man suspected to be connected with the case in Hung Hom. An investigation is ongoing. The arrested man has been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs will continue to take stringent enforcement actions against all kinds of smuggling activities through risk assessment and intelligence analysis.

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.

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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) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).



STL to visit Beijing

The Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung, will leave for Beijing tomorrow (April 9) for a duty visit.

Mr Lam will call on the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council and meet with representatives from the Ministry of Transport of the People's Republic of China, the Civil Aviation Administration of China, the National Railway Administration as well as the China State Railway Group Co., Ltd.

Mr Lam will return to Hong Kong on April 10. During his absence, the Under Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, will be the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, April 8, 2024 is 105.6 (same as last Saturday's index).

â€‹The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, April 6, 2024 was 105.6 (same as last Friday's index).

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety

(CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on April 5 to noon today (April 8), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 257 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category, in the past three days (including last Saturday and Sunday). No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" (www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 150 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 40 814 samples of food imported from Japan (including 27 078 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 11 280 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Red flags lowered at Repulse Bay Beach and Deep Water Bay Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (April 8) that since the waters off Repulse Bay Beach and Deep Water Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island, are now suitable for swimming, the red flags have been lowered.

The red flags were hoisted at the beaches earlier on after a red tide was found.