

Three persons sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

Three persons were sentenced to immediate imprisonment for up to six weeks by magistrates' courts today (July 14) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap 599C).

The first case involved a man aged 44, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he left the place of quarantine without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer and was stopped by staff of the Immigration Department at the Shenzhen Bay Control Point on March 5. He was charged with contravening sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for seven days.

The second case involved a woman aged 47, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at the residential address stated by herself on the quarantine order for 14 days. The woman was later found to have given a false residential address for use as the place of quarantine to an authorised officer at the Shenzhen Bay Control Point upon return to Hong Kong from the Mainland on April 16. She was charged with contravening section 9 of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for four weeks.

The third case involved a woman aged 27, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. She was found to have left the place of quarantine and had taken off her wristband without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer before the expiry of the quarantine order by law enforcement officers in Ngau Chi Wan on May 27. She was charged with two counts of contravening sections 8(1), 8(4) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for six weeks for each of the two charges, which are to run concurrently.

Pursuant to the Regulation, save for exempted persons, all persons who have stayed in the Mainland, Macao or Taiwan in the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong, regardless of their nationality or travel documents, will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Moreover, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap 599E), starting from March 19, all persons arriving from countries or territories outside China would also be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months. The Department of Health (DH) solemnly reminds persons under quarantine to comply with the statutory requirements and conduct quarantine

for 14 days.

A spokesman for the DH said the sentence sends a clear message to the community that breaching the Regulation is a criminal offence and that the Government will not tolerate such actions. As of today, a total of 33 persons have been convicted by the courts with imprisonment sentences of up to three months or a fine of \$10,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the Regulation.