

Three persons sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine orders

Three persons were sentenced by the magistrates' courts today (December 14) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) and the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E).

The first case involved a man aged 40, 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 on March 25 without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. He was charged with contravening sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E) and was sentenced by the Eastern Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for 10 days.

The remaining two cases involved a man aged 64 and a woman aged 42. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, they left the place of quarantine on June 23 and October 1 respectively without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. They were charged with contravening sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) and were sentenced by the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts and Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts today respectively to immediate imprisonment for 14 days.

Pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) starting from February 8, 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.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said the sentences send a clear message to the community that breaching a compulsory quarantine order is a criminal offence that the Government will not tolerate, and solemnly reminded the public to comply with the Regulation. As of today, a total of 85 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to three months or a fine of \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.