

Travellers jailed for smuggling European eels

Two men who smuggled European eels were convicted for violating the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance, and were sentenced to imprisonment.

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said that a 24-year-old local man and a 60-year-old Austrian male passenger arrived on December 1, 2018, from Lisbon, Portugal, via Moscow, Russia. A total of about 30 kilograms of European eels were found in their check-in suitcases by Customs officers.

During follow-up investigations, AFCD officers applied real-time polymerase chain reaction analysis and confirmed all the test samples came from European eels. The AFCD then charged both men with the illegal import of a listed species in Appendix II to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The 60-year-old male was convicted at the District Court on June 11. With 12 months' imprisonment as the starting point for sentencing, he was sentenced to eight months behind bars after reduction because he pleaded guilty. The 24-year-old male was also convicted at the District Court today (June 13). With 12 months' imprisonment as the starting point for sentencing, he was sentenced to six months behind bars after reduction due to his background and his guilty plea.

European eels are listed in Appendix II to the CITES and regulated under the Ordinance in Hong Kong. The penalties under the Ordinance have been amended and increased since May 1 last year. Any person importing, exporting or possessing specimens of endangered species not in accordance with the Ordinance will be liable to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years. The specimens will also be forfeited upon conviction. Members of the public are urged not to break the law.

To enquire about the control of endangered species or to report suspected irregularities, the public can call the AFCD on 1823 or visit the website www.cites.hk.

Hospital Authority response on number of casualties

The following is issued on behalf of Hospital Authority:

In response to media enquiries on number of casualties, the spokesperson for the Hospital Authority gave the following reply today (June 13):

As at 5pm today, 81 casualties related to the protest activities attended the Accident and Emergency Departments of 10 public hospitals, comprising 57 males and 24 females aged from 15 to 66. Five males and two females are still staying in hospital with stable condition.

Rescheduling of LegCo committee meetings

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The meeting of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways and the meeting of the LegCo Panel on Education originally scheduled for tomorrow (June 14) at 8.30am and 10.45am respectively have been rescheduled.

Man sentenced for assaulting Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspectors

A 60-year-old man was sentenced to two weeks' imprisonment suspended for one year at Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts today (June 13) for assaulting three Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspectors (TACIs) in the exercise of their duties. He was also fined \$1,800 for a smoking offence.

The incident took place at Tin Yan Shopping Centre in Tin Shui Wai on March 25, 2019. The man assaulted three TACIs when he was being issued a Fixed Penalty Notice by the TACIs for a smoking offence. He was subsequently arrested and charged by the Police.

A spokesman for the Department of Health urged the public to observe the smoking ban requirements and to co-operate with law enforcement officers.

"Threatening or use of violence on enforcement officers is a serious offence and carries serious legal consequences," the spokesman said.

As of today, there have been three cases of assaulting TACIs in 2019. Since 2007, 89 cases have been recorded and 21 out of 75 offenders convicted for assaulting TACIs were sentenced to immediate imprisonment. The maximum

penalty meted out by the court was immediate imprisonment for four months.

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected counterfeit and smuggled goods \(with photo\)](#)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs seized about 9 000 pairs of suspected counterfeit sports shoes and 450 suspected smuggled beauty products with an estimated market value of about \$560,000 from a container at the Customs Cargo Examination Compound, River Trade Terminal, Tuen Mun on June 8.

Through risk assessment, Customs officers inspected a 40-foot container arriving in Hong Kong from Huangpu, Guangdong, destined for Peru. Upon inspection, Customs officers seized the batch of suspected counterfeit and smuggled goods in the container.

Investigation is ongoing.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who imports or exports any goods to which a forged trade mark is applied commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

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 counterfeiting and smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

