

Illegal worker jailed

An Indonesian worker holding a recognisance form was jailed at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (May 16).

Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators received a referral from the Hong Kong Police Force to further investigate an illegal employment case this month. Enforcement officers arrested an Indonesian female, aged 42, who was found washing dishes at a restaurant in Yuen Long. Upon identity checking, she produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits her from taking up employment. Further investigation revealed that she was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking up employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. She pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking up any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are

arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase, and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

HyD invites tenders for management, operation, installation and maintenance of public lighting system in New Territories West

The Highways Department (HyD) today (May 17) invited tenders for a four-year contract for the management, operation, installation and maintenance of the public lighting system in New Territories West (contract no. 03/HY/2019) from October 2019 to September 2023.

The contract, which will be supervised by the Lighting Division of the HyD, covers the design, installation, management, operation and maintenance of the public lighting system in New Territories West. The public lighting system generally consists of conventional road lighting, village lighting, gantry sign lighting, roadside directional sign lighting, traffic bollard lighting and the associated network of cables, ducts and peripheral items. Within the designated contract area, there are about 71 700 road lighting points, 3 900 traffic bollards, and 2 100 lighting installations on illuminated gantry signs and roadside directional signs.

Tender submissions should be placed in the Government Secretariat Tender Box at the lobby of the Public Entrance on G/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong. Submission of tenders will close at noon on June 28, 2019 (Friday).

For enquiries, please call 3903 6550.

Red flag hoisted at Lo So Shing Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (May 17) that due to big waves, the red flag has been hoisted at Lo So Shing Beach in Islands District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

SHA to visit Japan

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, will depart for Japan at noon on May 21 (Tuesday). He will first visit Kagoshima Prefecture to meet with the Governor and visit community sports facilities.

The following day (May 22), Mr Lau will call at Takamatsu in the afternoon and meet with the Governor of Kagawa Prefecture. He will also visit the Setouchi Triennale 2019 and cultural facilities. On May 23, Mr Lau will proceed to Tokyo in the evening. During his stay in Tokyo, he will call at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and meet with officials of the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. He will also visit cultural and sports facilities and watch a performance presented by the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra.

Mr Lau will leave Tokyo and return to Hong Kong in the afternoon on May 25. During his absence, the Under Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Jack Chan, will be the Acting Secretary for Home Affairs.

General holidays for 2020 published

The following list of general holidays for 2020 is gazetted today (May 17) for public information:

Every Sunday		Sunday
The first day of January	January 1	Wednesday
Lunar New Year's Day	January 25	Saturday

The third day of Lunar New Year	January 27	Monday
The fourth day of Lunar New Year	January 28	Tuesday
Ching Ming Festival	April 4	Saturday
Good Friday	April 10	Friday
The day following Good Friday	April 11	Saturday
Easter Monday	April 13	Monday
Birthday of the Buddha	April 30	Thursday
Labour Day	May 1	Friday
Tuen Ng Festival	June 25	Thursday
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day	July 1	Wednesday
National Day	October 1	Thursday
The day following the Chinese Mid- Autumn Festival	October 2	Friday
The day following Chung Yeung Festival	October 26	Monday
Christmas Day	December 25	Friday
The first weekday after Christmas Day	December 26	Saturday

A Government spokesman said, "As the second day of Lunar New Year in 2020 falls on a Sunday, the fourth day of Lunar New Year is designated as a general holiday in substitution. In addition, since Chung Yeung Festival in 2020 falls on a Sunday, the day following it is designated as a general holiday in substitution."