

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes

Hong Kong Customs seized about 17 800 suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$48,000 and a duty potential of about \$34,000 at Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point on July 21.

Customs officers intercepted an incoming male passenger at Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point on July 21. Upon Customs clearance, Customs officers seized the batch of illicit cigarettes from a suitcase and a rucksack carried by him.

The arrested man, aged 33, was charged with possession of dutiable goods and was sentenced to four months' imprisonment at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (July 23).

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying illicit cigarettes commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may report any suspected illicit cigarette activities to the Customs 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

Appeal for information on missing man in Kwai Chung (with photo)

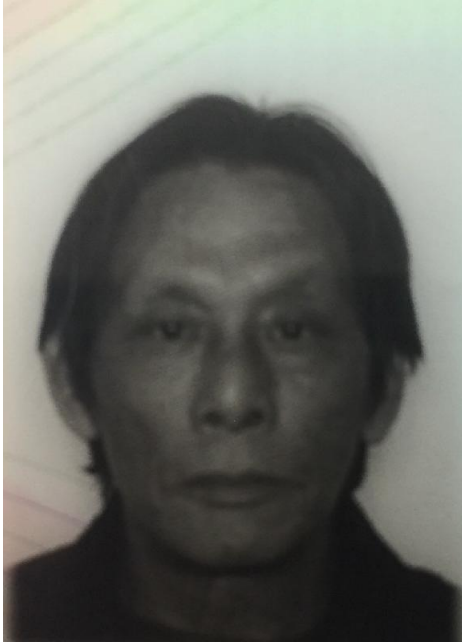
Police today (July 23) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Kwai Chung.

Leung Sing-chai, aged 68, went missing after he was last seen in a hospital on Princess Margaret Hospital Road on July 20 afternoon. A staff member of his elderly home made a report to Police on the next day (July 21).

He is about 1.66 metres tall, 59 kilograms in weight and of thin build. He has a long face with yellow complexion and short black hair. He was last seen wearing a grey short-sleeved T-shirt, black and white checkered trousers and blue slippers.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1176 or 9528 0749, or email to rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk, or contact

any police station.



CS visits Legal Aid Department

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, visited the Legal Aid Department today (July 23) to learn more about the work of the department and meet its staff.

Mr Cheung started his visit by meeting the Director of Legal Aid, Mr Thomas Kwong, and other senior officers of the department. They shared with Mr Cheung the services provided to the public, the work of various divisions and the challenges ahead.

Accompanied by Mr Kwong, Mr Cheung toured the Legal and Management Support (LMS) Section under the Policy and Administration Division. The LMS Section is mainly responsible for providing information technology and management support to the department, assessing bills of costs submitted by assigned lawyers, attending legal aid taxation hearings and conducting enforcement proceedings for the recovery of judgment debts and costs in legally aided cases.

Mr Cheung then visited the Litigation Division to find out more about the litigation services provided for aided persons whose cases have been assigned in-house. At the Crime Section, he was briefed on the processing of criminal legal aid applications and handling of criminal litigation, and the operation of the Remote Official Visit System. The System allows the officers to interview inmates at the Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre through a video conferencing system in the interview room.

He was also given a tour of the Application and Processing Division to understand how the front-line staff of the Information and Application Services Unit met with the public and handled their enquiries on matters related to the procedures for applying for legal aid. He received a briefing from officers on the processing of legal aid applications and the assessment of applicants' eligibility for civil legal aid on the basis of prescribed means and merits tests.

The responsibilities for formulating legal aid policy and housekeeping the department have been transferred to the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office since July 1, 2018.

Mr Cheung emphasised that legal aid services are the cornerstone of the rule of law in Hong Kong. He thanked the department for its efforts in providing quality legal aid services to the public as well as its commitment to ensuring that any person who has reasonable grounds for taking or defending a legal action will not be denied access to justice because of a lack of means. He was pleased to note that the department has also been working closely with the legal profession and other stakeholders with a view to enhancing its legal aid services. He encouraged colleagues of the Legal Aid Department to keep up their professionalism and dedication to serve the public.

CHP investigates suspected food poisoning case related to wild mushrooms

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (July 23) investigating a suspected case of food poisoning related to the consumption of wild mushrooms, and urged the public not to pick and eat wild mushrooms.

The 49-year-old female patient developed symptoms including abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhoea about two hours after consuming mushrooms at home yesterday (July 22). She attended the Accident and Emergency Department of United Christian Hospital on the same day. She is now in a stable condition.

Initial investigations revealed that the wild mushrooms consumed by the patient were picked from the hillside near Choi Tak Estate in Kwun Tong on July 21. The CHP's investigation is ongoing.

"Members of the public should not pick wild mushrooms for consumption as it is difficult to distinguish edible mushroom species from inedible ones," a

spokesman for the CHP said.

"Mushroom poisoning is generally acute. Common presentations include gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain appearing shortly after ingestion. Depending on the mushroom species, patients may also have other symptoms like profuse sweating, hallucination, coma or other neurological symptoms, as well as liver failure. Death may result in severe cases," he added.

"If mushroom poisoning is suspected, the patient should seek immediate medical attention and bring along any available remnant for identification," the spokesman said.

DH reiterates that supply of DTaP-IPV Vaccine is stable

In response to media enquiries on the situation of local children receiving Diphtheria, Tetanus, Acellular Pertussis and Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine (DTaP-IPV Vaccine) (4-in-1 combination vaccine), a spokesman of the Department of Health (DH) today (July 23) reiterated that the current local supply of the vaccine concerned remains stable.

Under the Hong Kong Childhood Immunisation Programme, the Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) of the Family Health Service (FHS) under the DH provide various vaccinations for eligible children, including DTaP-IPV Vaccine. Since April 1, 2016, the DH has implemented measures to accord priority of child health services to local children in its MCHCs. A quota has also been set for Non-eligible Persons (NEPs) at 120 new cases per month. The DH has signed a contract with vaccine suppliers which ensures sufficient vaccines to provide vaccination services for eligible local children and NEPs under the quota system.

In Hong Kong, 5-in-1 combination vaccines (containing diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis and Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine components) and 6-in-1 combination vaccines (containing the 5-in-1 vaccine plus hepatitis B vaccine components) are also available in the private healthcare sector.

The Drug Office of the DH has been in close liaison with the two local suppliers of the vaccines concerned to Hong Kong and learnt that the supply of the three types of vaccines concerned remains stable. The DH, together with the vaccine suppliers, will continue to closely monitor the supply of the vaccines concerned in both the public and private healthcare sectors locally.

In order to achieve good and lasting protection, a child should receive three doses of DTaP-IPV vaccine in the first year of life (at 2 months, 4 months and 6 months), and a booster dose at 18 months. Two other doses will be given to Primary One students and Primary Six students*. DTaP-IPV can be given with other vaccines.

* Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (reduced dose) and inactivated poliovirus vaccine is recommended for Primary Six students.

For more frequently asked questions on the 4-in-1 combination vaccine, the public may refer to the website of the FHS of the DH at www.fhs.gov.hk/english/health_info/child/485.html.