

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cocaine at airport \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (November 1) seized about 4.4 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$5.4 million at Hong Kong International Airport.

A 21-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Munich, Germany, via Doha, Qatar, yesterday. During customs clearance, Customs officers found three stuffed toys in his carry-on suitcase, in which 188 pellets of suspected cocaine weighing about 4.4kg in total were concealed. The man was subsequently arrested.

The arrested man has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug and will appear at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (November 3).

Following the resumption of normal travel and exchanges with the Mainland and other parts of the world, the number of visitors to Hong Kong has also been increasing steadily. Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance to combat transnational drug trafficking activities.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).



Interest rate of the sixth interest payment for iBond Series due 2023

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority, as representative of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, announced today (November 2) the relevant per annum interest rate for the sixth interest payment of iBond Series due 2023 (Issue Number 03GB2311R; Stock Code: 4239) (the Bonds) issued under the Retail Bond Issuance Programme of the Government Bond Programme.

According to the Issue Circular dated October 5, 2020, for the Bonds, the sixth interest payment of the Bonds is scheduled to be made on November 16, 2023, and the relevant interest rate is scheduled to be determined and announced on November 2, 2023, as the higher of the prevailing Floating Rate and Fixed Rate.

On November 2, 2023, the Floating Rate and Fixed Rate are as follows:

Floating Rate: +1.93 per cent (Annex)

Fixed Rate: +2.00 per cent

Based on the Floating Rate and Fixed Rate set out above, the relevant interest rate for the sixth interest payment is determined and announced as 2.00 per cent per annum.

Temporary closure of some facilities of Kowloon Park Sports Centre

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (November 2) that as the Kowloon Park Sports Centre will be lent to the Registration and Electoral Office and is designated to hold the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election Lots Drawing Session, the following facilities of the Kowloon Park Sports Centre will be temporarily closed:

(1) The multi-purpose arena, secondary hall, a dance room, squash courts, an activity room, changing rooms and toilets will be closed from November 4 to 7; and

(2) All facilities will be closed on November 8 and 9.

During the closure period, members of the public may use similar facilities at the Boundary Street Sports Centre, Fa Yuen Street Sports

Centre, Kwun Chung Sports Centre and Tai Kok Tsui Sports Centre in the same district.

For enquiries, please contact venue staff at 2724 3120.

CHP announces end of summer influenza season

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (November 2) announced the end of the summer influenza season which started in late August this year. The CHP reminded members of the public to continue to maintain personal, hand and environmental hygiene against respiratory tract infection, including seasonal influenza, COVID-19 and Mycoplasma pneumoniae infection, and stressed that vaccination can effectively prevent serious influenza and COVID-19 cases.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "According to the latest surveillance data, the percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for seasonal influenza viruses received by the CHP's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) was 5.4 per cent, and the admission rate with the principal diagnosis of influenza in public hospitals was 0.24 per 10 000 population in the week ending October 28. These data have returned below the baseline level. The predominating virus during the period was influenza A(H3), accounting for around 85 per cent of the respiratory specimens collected and with subtype results by the CHP's PHLSB and the Hospital Authority."

Moreover, the weekly number of reported influenza-like illness outbreaks decreased from 91 in the week ending September 23 to 23 in the week ending October 28. For severe or death cases, there were 51 severe influenza cases (including death cases) in the week ending September 30, while the figure for the week ending October 28 was lowered to 28.

The surveillance data above indicated the end of the influenza season which started in late August this year. Although the 10-week long summer influenza season has ended, the spokesman reminded members of the public that, based on historical data, influenza season usually arrives in the winter months (late 2023 to early 2024). All persons aged 6 months or above, except those with known contraindications, are recommended to receive seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) for personal protection.

The CHP reminded members of the public that as influenza viruses and the SARS-CoV-2 virus may both spread at the same time, getting influenza and COVID-19 vaccination is of vital importance in protecting the healthcare system from being overwhelmed. The DH welcomes the joint statement made by 12 medical and relevant organisations earlier on October 19 appealing to

infants, children, pregnant and breastfeeding women, the elderly and those with chronic diseases to receive SIV as soon as possible and complete their COVID-19 vaccination. The CHP strongly urged members of the public, particularly children, the elderly and chronic disease patients, to receive vaccination as early as possible for effective protection against COVID-19 and influenza. Details of receiving both COVID-19 vaccination and seasonal influenza vaccination are available online (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106096.html). Eligible persons can make a reservation on the designated website (booking.covidvaccine.gov.hk).

The spokesman appealed again to symptomatic individuals, even if the symptoms are mild, that they should wear surgical masks and seek medical attention promptly to reduce the risk of spreading the virus to high-risk persons. Personal, hand and environmental hygiene should also be maintained at all times.

For the latest information, please refer to the [COVID-19 & Flu Express](#) published by the CHP.

[Update on cluster of Candida auris cases in Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement on Candida auris carrier cases, the spokesperson for Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital (HKBH) gave the following update today (November 2):

Following a contact tracing investigation, one more male patient aged 90 in the medical ward of HKBH was confirmed to carry Candida auris without signs of infection. He is in stable condition and now being treated in isolation.

The hospital will continue the contact tracing investigation of close contacts of the patient in accordance with the prevailing guidelines. A series of enhanced infection control measures have already been adopted to prevent the spread of Candida auris:

1. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of the ward concerned;
2. Enhanced admission screening for patients and environmental screening procedures; and
3. Application of stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene of staff and patients.

The hospital will continue to closely monitor the situation of the

patient. The case has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.