

Hong Kong Customs detects illicit cigarette smuggling cases involving air passengers and raids illicit cigarette storage centre (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs over the past two weeks enhanced enforcement actions at Hong Kong International Airport and detected illicit cigarette smuggling cases involving air passengers. Also, Customs raided a suspected illicit cigarette storage centre in Yuen Long yesterday (March 6), seizing a total of about 6.7 million suspected illicit cigarettes and about 570 000 suspected alternative smoking products, with a total estimated total market value of about \$33 million. The duty potential of the illicit cigarettes was about \$22 million.

In the small hours today (March 7), Customs officers intercepted a male outside a hotel in Tin Shui Wai and seized a total of about 90 000 sticks of suspected illicit cigarettes and about 110 000 suspected alternative smoking products in his nylon bag and the hotel room he was staying in. The man was subsequently arrested. After investigations, Customs believes that illicit cigarette syndicate made use of air passengers to smuggle illicit cigarettes and alternative smoking products, which were then stored in hotel rooms for further distribution.

The arrested man, aged 36 and claiming to be unemployed, was charged. He will appear at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (March 8). The suspected alternative smoking products seized will be handed over to the Department of Health for follow-up action.

At the same time, Customs detected 20 illicit cigarette smuggling cases with 13 men and eight women arrested at the airport over the past two weeks. A total of about 600 000 suspected illicit cigarettes and about 460 000 suspected alternative smoking products, with an estimated total market value of about \$4 million and a duty potential of about \$2 million, were seized.

It is believed that the syndicate that smuggle illicit cigarettes and alternative smoking products through passengers was smashed.

Moreover, after an in-depth investigation, Customs carried out a strike-and-search operation at a logistics warehouse in Yuen Long yesterday. Customs officers intercepted a man who was moving goods to a vehicle and seized about 6 million suspected illicit cigarettes in the vehicle and the warehouse. The 44-year-old man, who claimed to be a driver, was arrested. He has been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs will continue its risk assessment and intelligence analysis for interception at source as well as through its multipronged enforcement

strategy targeting storage, distribution and peddling to spare no effort in combating illicit cigarette activities.

Customs stresses that it is an offence to buy or sell illicit cigarettes. 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 Customs' 24-hour hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).



[London ETO showcases Hong Kong's thriving innovation and technology ecosystem \(with photos\)](#)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (London ETO), in collaboration with Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK), the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES), and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) hosted a seminar in London, the United Kingdom, on March 6 (London time) showcasing Hong Kong's dynamic innovation and technology (I&T) ecosystem.

The seminar featured distinguished speakers who provided insights into Hong Kong's future in I&T. In his opening remarks, the Director-General of the London ETO, Mr Gilford Law, emphasised Hong Kong's role as a global I&T hub and gateway to the Greater Bay Area (GBA). "Hong Kong offers a dynamic business environment with world-class infrastructure, strong government support, and access to a wide network of investors and researchers. Our strategic location provides businesses with unique opportunities to tap into

the growing GBA, particularly in key sectors such as artificial intelligence, fintech, and biotechnology."

The Chief Executive Officer of the HKSTP, Mr Albert Wong, presented HKSTP's thriving I&T ecosystem. He said, "As a growing engine situated at an international I&T hub in Asia, the HKSTP understands that nurturing next-generation I&T talent is as important as any R&D project, if not more. We're currently an ecosystem that over 2 200 tech companies from 26 countries and regions call home, offering comprehensive support to more than 15 000 research and development professionals – a network we're looking overseas to extend, and a number we're eager to invest in for a sustainable future."

Following this, the Deputy Director-General of the OASES, Dr Jimmy Chiang, provided an overview of I&T developments in Hong Kong. "The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has been committed to advancing the I&T ecosystem through substantial efforts, which include significant financial investments in the past few years to establish new I&T infrastructures, foster international research collaborations, and offer a diverse range of funding schemes for I&T projects and companies. The development of new I&T zones within the territory provides tremendous opportunities for I&T enterprises, specifically in expanding their research and development functions," he said.

The Head of Business and Talent Attraction/Investment Promotion of the InvestHK London Office, Ms Daisy Ip, concluded the seminar by highlighting Hong Kong's strategic advantages for businesses and talent. "From Hong Kong's world-class infrastructure and strategic location to our vibrant talent pool and government-backed initiatives, Hong Kong serves as a launchpad for those looking to scale, collaborate, and push boundaries both regionally and globally," she said.

A networking reception was held immediately after the seminar. Around 80 participants joined the entire event, including representatives from local government and professionals from the I&T, business and academic sectors, providing an opportunity for further collaboration and discussions.





S for S talks about co-ordinating rescue of six Hong Kong residents detained in Southeast Asia

Following are the remarks by the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, at a media session after returning from Thailand at Hong Kong International Airport this afternoon (March 7):

Reporter: Aside from the Hong Kong Alliance, how many times has the Government used NSL powers to demand information from foreign agents? Are you worried about those other NSL Notices being unlawful and also being challenged in court? My second question is a Hong Kong student died last week during a school trip to China, does the case involve a criminal element? Is Hong Kong law enforcement involved in the investigation?

Secretary for Security: First of all, regarding the figures that you would like to know, I think my Press Secretary would provide you with the figures a bit later. For the issuance of (notices with) any of those powers under NSL (National Security Law), we are based on evidence and facts.

Regarding the case you mentioned in the Mainland China, because it happened in the Mainland China, and the authority rests with the Mainland authority.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the remarks)

Correctional officers intercept smuggling of suspected dangerous drug into Tai Lam Centre for Women

Correctional officers at Tai Lam Centre for Women today (March 7) intercepted a female remand person in custody smuggling suspected dangerous drugs into the centre by concealing it inside her body.

The 25-year-old person in custody was remanded for the offence of trafficking in a dangerous drug on February 18. After undergoing X-ray body scanning, she was suspected to have swallowed the dangerous drug before admission. She was therefore separated and put under close monitoring. After a total of five packs of suspected dangerous drugs wrapped in plastic sheets were discharged by her on February 21, March 1 and March 6 successively, correctional officers seized another two packs of suspected drugs weighed about 29 grams wrapped in plastic sheets from the remand person in custody at 3.02pm today.

The case has been reported to the Police for follow-up.

A spokesman for the Correctional Services Department said, "The department takes every measure to stop the introduction of dangerous drugs or unauthorised articles into correctional institutions in order to maintain good order and discipline, and a drug-free environment for all persons in custody."

Correctional officers stop remand person in custody from committing suicide by hanging

Correctional officer stopped a 40-year-old male remand person in custody

from committing suicide by hanging in Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre today (March 7).

At 2.40pm today, a correctional officer found the remand person in custody attempting suicide in his cell by hanging with a bedsheet tied to a fire fighting pipe outside the cell. The officer immediately called for reinforcements to rescue and provide first-aid treatment to him. The remand person in custody was found unconscious at the time and was subsequently sent to a public hospital for further treatment. The case has been reported to the Police.

A spokesman for the Correctional Services Department said, "The department uses all possible measures to prevent persons in custody from attempting suicide or self-harm. These measures include administrative arrangements, improvement of institution facilities, staff training and first-aid services."

The person in custody was remanded for the offence of theft in May 2024.