

# Immigration Department strongly condemns unfounded allegations against Castle Peak Bay Immigration Centre by online media

In response to online media reports alleging inhumane treatment of detainees who refused to collect meals at the Castle Peak Bay Immigration Centre (CIC) of the Immigration Department (ImmD), the ImmD solemnly clarified that the reports are completely untrue. The ImmD strongly condemns anyone who deliberately distorted facts and fabricated groundless accusations against detention-related matters by the ImmD pursuant to lawful procedures.

Some recent reports published through online media alleged the ImmD to have indefinitely detained non-refoulement claimants, inhumanely treated the detainees who refused to collect meals and refused to provide suitable medical treatment to them. The reports also mentioned complaints against unsatisfactory hygiene conditions in the CIC. It should be pointed out that these allegations are, however, unfounded. The ImmD expressed deep regrets that such reports are distorted and void of factual basis, and intend to mislead the public.

An ImmD spokesperson stressed that all arrangements for detainees are made in accordance with the Immigration (Treatment of Detainees) Order (The Order), Cap. 115E laws of Hong Kong to ensure that they are treated fairly and properly. The detainees at the CIC are accorded the treatment provided by the Order, such as medical examinations, exercise, personal hygiene, channels for lodging complaints, visits by justices of the peace and communication with legal advisers, etc. All arrangements for the detainees at the CIC are also implemented in strict accordance with the established procedures to ensure that they are treated fairly and properly. Any detainee who is dissatisfied with their treatment may immediately lodge a complaint with the Office of The Ombudsman, justices of the peace or the ImmD. The ImmD will handle the complaints in a serious manner in compliance with the prevailing laws and procedures.

The medical officer in the CIC all along has provided appropriate medical treatment to detainees in strict accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct for the Guidance of Registered Medical Practitioners by the Medical Council of Hong Kong. Since the incident in which some detainees refused to collect meals, ImmD staff have been closely monitoring the health condition of the detainees concerned. The medical professionals on duty around the clock have conducted medical examinations for them, which include measuring their weight on daily basis and blood glucose levels on alternate days. If necessary, the detainee concerned will be sent to hospital immediately for further examination. So far, detainees' blood glucose levels are normal and they are emotionally stable. Most of the detainees concerned

are taking milk tea and milk provided by the CIC and are doing exercise. Meanwhile, immigration staff have repeatedly persuaded them to resume collecting meals and have provided counselling services to them. Meetings have also been held with those who refused to collect meals to fully explain to them the reasons for their detention and provide information on the latest progress of their cases. As for a news report that alleged that a detainee was "not drinking any water" for seven days or was detained alone, the ImmD points out that these allegations are factually inaccurate.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has formulated the detention policies concerned according to the relevant legal principles established by the courts, which stipulate that the ImmD will take into consideration all the facts and circumstances of a concerned case, including whether the person concerned has committed a serious crime, whether the person is likely to pose a threat to the community, and whether there is any risk of the person absconding or reoffending, etc. When exercising its statutory power of detention, the ImmD strictly follows the relevant detention policies and fully considers all the circumstances of the particular case before making a decision. The duration of detention imposed on a person under detention depends on the circumstances of the case and any relevant changes, which cannot be generalised. The media coverage in question were void of sufficient justifications and failed to take into account the overall background of the cases, including the fact that each of the detainees is either an illegal immigrant or an overstayer in Hong Kong, and many of them have a history of absconding or convictions of serious criminal offences, namely trafficking in dangerous drugs, wounding, blackmailing, committing indecent offences, etc. They pose security risks to the community, such as risks of absconding. The ImmD condemns those media that have clearly distorted the facts and inappropriately accused the Department's detention decisions pursuant to the prevailing law of amounting to an "indefinite detention" and a "violation of human rights".

The ImmD repeatedly stressed that despite the ongoing pandemic, its staff continue to follow up and conduct timely reviews without interruption on each of the detention cases in accordance with the prevailing detention policies and mechanisms in order to determine whether an individual should be further detained. The person concerned will be notified in writing of the review results with justifications, as well as receive an explanation of the situation through an interview. Any detainee who is dissatisfied with the detention decision should resort to the court as a proper and statutorily established venue. In fact, some of the detainees who refused to collect meals had instituted proceedings in the court, asking the court to decide on the legality of their detention and to order a termination of the detention. Nevertheless, the court dismissed all the litigations and upheld the legality of the detention authority exercised.

Regarding the allegation of unsatisfactory hygiene conditions of the CIC, the ImmD emphasised that all detention facilities of the CIC are cleaned and disinfected regularly every day. The CIC has also strengthened the cleaning and disinfection work of various detention facilities including dayrooms, dormitories, toilets, bathrooms and office areas to maintain a

hygienic environment during the COVID-19 epidemic.

An ImmD spokesman reiterated that "The ImmD has all along been performing duties in accordance with the law and any malpractice would not be tolerated. The Department strongly condemns any person making one-sided and unfounded allegations against the Department without concrete facts, with intent to interfere with the Department's discharge of its statutory duties and coerce the Department into releasing the persons concerned. The ImmD will continue to strive its utmost to fulfil its duties in upholding the public interest and safeguard social security.

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## **Registration for COVID-19 testing service for restaurant staff to end on August 20**

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (August 13) said that registration for the voluntary one-off free COVID-19 testing service for restaurant staff will end at 5pm on August 20 (Thursday). The FEHD appealed to the food industry again to participate in the testing scheme and make the registration online at the FEHD website before the deadline.

The testing service provided for restaurant staff started on July 17. The catering business staff group (including licensed restaurants, licensed light refreshment restaurants, licensed marine restaurants, licensed factory canteens, school canteens, staff canteens, public market cooked food/light refreshment stalls and licensed cooked food hawker stalls) is provided with a one-off free virus testing service. Operators of restaurants may register online at the FEHD website ([www.fehd.gov.hk/english/events/covid19\\_test/restaurant.html](http://www.fehd.gov.hk/english/events/covid19_test/restaurant.html)).

As of yesterday (August 12), the testing agency has delivered over 129 400 specimen bottles to more than 6 680 restaurants. Over 69 800 samples have been collected for testing. The testing agency has completed testing on a majority of the specimens returned. Samples with a preliminary positive result have been sent to the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health for follow-up. So far, in total, 17 cases have been determined to have a preliminary positive test result.

For details of the testing programme, please call the hotline of the testing agency (Prenetics Limited) at 3008 8319 or visit the FEHD website ([www.fehd.gov.hk](http://www.fehd.gov.hk)).

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## [Update on Candida auris cases in Kowloon West Cluster](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement on Candida auris carrier cases, the spokesperson for Kowloon West Cluster gave the following update today (August 13):

According to contact tracing by Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH), one more patient has been confirmed as carrying Candida auris. A 79-year-old female patient was confirmed as a Candida auris carrier while not having signs of infection. The patient has been discharged. In accordance with the prevailing guidelines, PMH has continued contact tracing for the patient.

Furthermore, according to contact tracing by Yan Chai Hospital, two more male patients, aged 97 and 93, who had stayed in the same male medical ward were confirmed as carrying Candida auris without signs of infection. The patients passed away on July 27 and August 1 respectively due to underlying illnesses.

The two hospitals have conducted thorough cleaning and disinfection of the wards concerned, applied stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene of staff and patients. The hospitals will continue to closely monitor the situation of the patients. The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

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## [Appeal for information on missing man in Tai Po \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (August 13) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Tai Po.

Kwan Wai-tong, aged 57, went missing after he left his residence on Ma Wo Road last night (August 12). His family made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.73 metres tall, 60 kilograms in weight and of thin build. He has a long face with yellow complexion and short grey hair. He was last seen

wearing a pair of glasses, a brown short-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, blue shoes and carrying a green shoulder bag.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Persons Unit of New Territories North on 3661 3112 or 6273 5787 or email to [rmpu-ntn-1@police.gov.hk](mailto:rmpu-ntn-1@police.gov.hk), or contact any police station.



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## EDB's latest public service arrangements

In view of the extension of special work arrangements for government employees until August 23, a spokesman for the Education Bureau (EDB) announced today (August 13) that all Regional Education Offices and the Joint Office for Kindergartens and Child Care Centres will continue to provide emergency services and essential public services during this period.

The spokesman reminded members of the public who need these services to contact the service units concerned by phone in advance.

As for appointments already made for the audiological services at the Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre, officers of the EDB will contact the parents concerned for appropriate arrangements.

The School Places Allocation Section will continue to provide limited hotline services to handle enquiries.

When circumstances permit, the Teacher Registration Team will invite applicants to proceed with necessary procedures in due course. New teachers taking up teaching posts in the new school year would not be affected in principle.

Regarding the following public facilities/units of the EDB, they will remain closed to the public temporarily until further notice:

1. Hong Kong Teachers' Centre, Special Education Resource Centre, Central Resources Centre and Young Achievers' Gallery located at Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre;
2. Arts and Technology Education Centre (including STEM Education Centre);
3. School Places Allocation Section;
4. Qualifications Framework Secretariat; and
5. Teacher Registration Team.