

Red flag at Golden Beach lowered

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 (LCSD) announced today (June 3) that the red flag has been lowered at Golden Beach in Tuen Mun District, following the discovery of a large fish yesterday.

An LCSD spokesman said the department's shark prevention net maintenance contractor has completed inspection of the shark prevention net at the beach, and confirmed that there was no big fish inside the enclosed zone of the net and the net was in good condition.

The spokesman appealed to swimmers to swim in the enclosed zones of the shark prevention nets while lifeguards are on duty for safety's sake, adding that LCSD staff will remain vigilant and strengthen patrols in the swimming zones.

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cocaine (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 10 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$11 million at Hong Kong International Airport on June 1.

Customs officers inspected an air consignment that had arrived in Hong Kong from the Netherlands on that day and found the batch of suspected cocaine concealed inside the compartments of 10 unassembled office chairs.

Upon follow-up investigation, Customs officers yesterday (June 2) arrested a 61-year-old man suspected to be connected with the case in Kwai Chung.

The arrested man has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. He will appear at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (June 4).

Customs will continue to step up enforcement actions against drug trafficking activities through air cargo, postal parcel and express courier

channels, as well as maintain close contact with Hongkong Post and the logistics industries, with a view to intercepting the inflow of drugs to Hong Kong.

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).



[Hong Kong Customs reminds public to avoid using loose-packed surgical masks \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs today (June 3) said the latest test results of surgical masks revealed that the bacterial counts of one type of loose-packed surgical mask exceeded the maximum permitted limit, in contravention of the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance (CGSO). Customs reminds members of the public to avoid using loose-packed surgical masks as their safety is in question while the sources are unknown and basic product descriptions are missing.

Customs earlier received the test results of the latest batch of 40 test-purchased surgical mask samples. According to the relevant hygienic standard for disposable sanitary products, the total bacterial counts of the sample of a loose-packed surgical mask exceeded the maximum permitted limit by 25 per cent, in contravention of the CGSO.

The type of surgical mask concerned was loosely packed in a transparent plastic bag of five pieces each and was sold for \$20. The loose-packed mask has no label to indicate its brand or manufacturing place. Customs officers test-purchased the mask from a pharmacy in Tai Po in April this year.

Noting the test results, Customs conducted immediate enforcement action and arrested a 43-year-old male director and a 44-year-old female director who are now being detained for further investigation.

Customs will further examine the surgical mask involved to establish the types of bacteria present. Also, Customs is undertaking investigation on the source of the surgical mask.

Customs reminds members of the public to avoid purchasing loose-packed surgical masks since it is difficult to guarantee their quality and the safety risk is also relatively higher.

In view of the development of the COVID-19 epidemic, Customs launched a large-scale territory-wide special operation codenamed "Guardian" on January 27 this year to conduct spot checks, test purchases and inspections in various districts on surgical masks available in the market. Samples of masks were also sent to the laboratory for tests on bacterial counts. To date, Customs has already test-purchased over 400 types of surgical masks for tests on bacterial counts and, among these, 240 samples have been tested for bacterial counts.

Apart from the sample announced in this round, Customs has also announced a further eight types of surgical masks with bacterial counts exceeding the maximum permitted limit on March 14 and April 17, of which the total bacterial counts exceeded the maximum permitted limit by 20 per cent to 11.5 times.

Customs again reminds members of the public to observe the following tips when purchasing and using surgical masks:

- Check if there is any dirt on the masks and stop using those with stains or odd smells;
- Pay attention to the proper way of using surgical masks;
- Change surgical masks at a suitable time;
- Store surgical masks in dry places; and
- Purchase surgical masks at reputable retail shops.

The "Guardian" operation has been running for over four months to date. More than 4 900 officers have been mobilised to conduct over 33 000 inspections at retail spots in various districts to ensure that common protective items sold in the market comply with the CGSO and the Trade Descriptions Ordinance.



[Men and women given suspended jail sentences for operating and managing unlicensed guesthouse](#)

Two men and three women were each sentenced to one month's imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, at the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today (June 3) for contravening the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance.

The courts heard that from August to November last year, officers of the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA), the Home Affairs Department, inspected four suspected unlicensed guesthouses on Reclamation Street, Portland Street, To Kwa Wan Road and Cheung Sha Wan Road in Kowloon. During the inspections, the OLA officers posed as lodgers and successfully rented rooms or "capsule-like accommodation" in these guesthouses on a daily or hourly basis.

According to the OLA's records, these guesthouses did not possess licences under the Ordinance on the days of inspection. The men and women responsible for operating and managing the premises were charged with contravening section 5(1) of the Ordinance.

A department spokesman stressed that operating or managing an unlicensed guesthouse is a criminal offence and can lead to a criminal record. Upon conviction, the offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The spokesman appealed to anyone with information about suspected unlicensed guesthouses to report it to the OLA through the hotline (Tel: 2881 7498), by email (hadlaeng@had.gov.hk), by fax (2504 5805) using the report form downloaded from the OLA website (www.hadla.gov.hk), or through the mobile application "Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses".

SCS on civil service pay freeze

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, at a media session in the Legislative Council Complex today (June 3):

Reporter: The disciplined services staff representatives said that civil servants haven't been invited or consulted before the decision ... (inaudible)? And what do you think of their opinion that if an appropriate amount of pay rise is given to them, the economy will improve because they would have a stronger will to spend money?

Secretary for the Civil Service: In accordance with our established mechanism, the pay claims made by the staff unions is one of the six key factors (on civil service pay adjustment). Last week, I met with the staff side representatives of the four central staff consultative councils and four major service-wide staff unions and received their pay claims, listened to their views and concerns and communicated with them. So when the Chief Executive-in-Council considered the matter and took the decision, they have taken into account the pay claims and also the views and concerns expressed by the staff side.

Reporter: They said in this difficult time, if an appropriate amount of pay rise is given ...

Secretary for the Civil Service: I think we are facing an unprecedented difficult situation now in Hong Kong. It's important that we deal with the epidemic, put it under control, and then we can be back to normal, or you can say "new normal". It is important that our economic activities can resume and we can relaunch our economy. And only by so doing, we can deal with the crisis we are facing and improve our livelihood, reduce the unemployment rate, and it is important that every one of us in the community have jobs to earn the living. So I think that is the way that we have to deal with the situation right now.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)