

Four illegal workers jailed

Four Vietnamese illegal workers were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (May 6).

During operation "Twilight" conducted on May 4, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided a logistics centre in Tsing Yi. Four male Vietnamese illegal workers, aged 30 to 35, were arrested while working as warehouse workers. Upon identity checking, three male Vietnamese produced for inspection recognisance forms issued by the ImmD, which prohibit them from taking employment. A further investigation revealed that they were non-refoulement claimants.

The four illegal workers were charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. They pleaded guilty to the charge and were each sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screenings on vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers who are arrested during any operation, with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in

the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threats and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

ITB clarifies that CuMask+[TM] not manufactured by Sun Hing Knitting Factory Limited nor Nan Fung Group

A spokesman for the Innovation and Technology Bureau clarified today (May 6) that the CuMask+™ are not manufactured by the Sun Hing Knitting Factory Limited nor Nan Fung Group and expressed regret about the online rumours.

The procurement of raw materials, coordination of production, sterilisation and packaging of the CuMask+™ are being handled by the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel in order to have the masks ready for distribution to the public as soon as possible.

Government expresses regret over Central and Western District Council members' enter into Central and Western District Office and their refusal to leave

A number of members of the Central and Western District Council today (May 6) entered the office area of the Central and Western District Office without the consent of the District Office. They shouted loudly and knocked on the door in the office. Despite the repeated responses and appeal to the members from the staff of the District Office, the members still refused to leave. They have stayed in the District Office for long time, seriously

affecting the operation of the District Office. The Government expressed regret over their acts.

The Government urges the members to focus on district livelihood issues and discuss matters rationally. The Government will continue to co-operate with the District Council sincerely under the principles of mutual respect, observation of order and rational discussion.

[CE visits CuMask+\[TM\] production workshop \(with photos / video\)](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, this morning (May 6) inspected one of the production sites of CuMask+™ in Tsuen Wan and expressed her gratitude to the staff and workers for their dedication in producing the high-quality reusable masks in the past months for all Hong Kong citizens to fight against the epidemic.

Accompanied by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, Mrs Lam visited one of the production sites of CuMask+™ in Hong Kong where she was briefed on the production process and related facilities by the Chief Executive Officer of the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA), Mr Edwin Keh. Mrs Lam also chatted with the workers, noting that many of them are retired workers of the textile industry who have re-joined the production workforce to fight against the epidemic. Mrs Lam praised them for their commitment to serve and expressed her heartfelt thanks for their hard work.

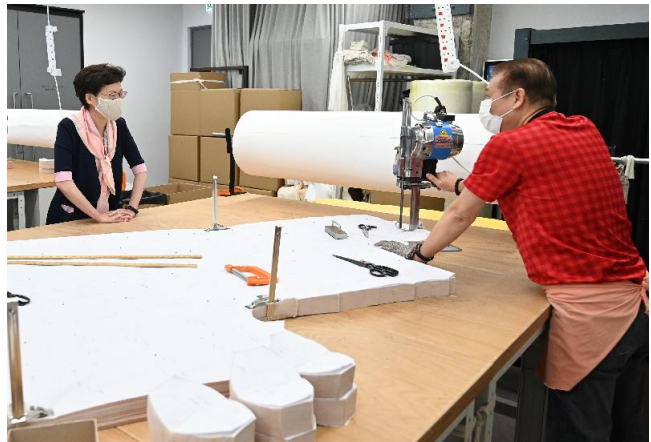
Since the masks produced in the workshop will be delivered to a clean workspace for sterilising with ozone and packing before distribution, there is no need for members of the public to wash the mask before it is used for the first time.

In the face of the tight supply of masks amid the epidemic, the Government set aside funds to subsidise projects on technology applications of reusable masks under the first round of the Anti-epidemic Fund approved by the Legislative Council, enabling the birth of CuMask+™ announced yesterday (May 5). The patented design adopted by CuMask+™ was developed by HKRITA with the support of the Innovation and Technology Fund, and was awarded a Gold Medal at the International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva 2018. The mask reaches the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) F2100 Level 1 standard and can be washed 60 times. It can even be used for a long period after replacing the filter.

"I am pleased to note that CuMask+™ is well received by the public and the registration process has been very smooth. As of 6pm today, over 1.57

million people had registered on the website. Relevant departments will arrange delivery of the masks to the public as soon as possible. I also appeal to members of the public to make use of the registration quota of up to six persons as much as possible to minimise delivery resources and enhance efficiency," Mrs Lam said.

"CuMask+™ is a home-grown scientific research achievement with local application. The whole process has involved co-operation between the Government, industry, academia and the research sector and is an outstanding example of the use technology to improve people's lives. It will also help solve the problem of the supply of face masks during an epidemic in the long run. I highly commend all the people who have participated in the relevant work and I am fully confident in the development of innovation and technology in Hong Kong," Mrs Lam said.



AFCD continues closure of barbecue sites and campsites in country parks until May 20

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) announced today (May 6) that, to reduce social contact as far as possible, the barbecue sites and campsites in country parks will continue to be closed until May 20 (11.59pm on Wednesday night).

There are currently 163 barbecue sites and 41 campsites under the management of the AFCD, and all of them are closed between 6pm on March 28 and May 7. To reduce social contact as far as possible, the department decided to extend the closure until May 20. Details of these sites are available on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk). During the closure of the facilities, no one should carry out barbecuing or camping activities in country parks, or enter barbecue sites or campsites in country parks. AFCD staff will step up patrols of the sites concerned. Appropriate follow-up actions will be taken against any violation of relevant regulations.

An AFCD spokesman noted that the department will continue to closely monitor the situation and review the above arrangement as appropriate. For enquiries, please call 1823. For the latest updates on the facilities in the country parks, members of the public can also visit the "Enjoy Hiking" website (www.hiking.gov.hk).

The spokesman reminded country park visitors to maintain personal and environmental hygiene and social distancing. Visitors should properly dispose of used masks and waste and take their litter home.