

## Six illegal workers jailed

Six Vietnamese illegal workers were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (December 23).

During an anti-illegal worker operation conducted on October 24, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided a restaurant in Causeway Bay. A female Vietnamese illegal worker, aged 50, was arrested while working as an odd job worker. Upon identity checking, she produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits her from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that she was a non-refoulement claimant.

In addition, during operation "Twilight" conducted on November 6, ImmD investigators raided two restaurants in Yuen Long. Three male and two female Vietnamese illegal workers, aged 24 to 55, were arrested while working as odd job workers. Upon identity checking, they could not provide any proof of identity. Further investigation revealed that they were illegal immigrants.

The six 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 sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. Meanwhile, one male was also charged with one count of remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and one count of using a forged Hong Kong identity card. The sentences of the two counts were 15 months' imprisonment respectively. All sentences are to run concurrently, making a total of 15 months' imprisonment. In addition, two men and two women were charged with one count of remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully. They were sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. All sentences are to run concurrently, making a total of 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. Under the prevailing laws, it is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

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 screening of 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 threat 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.

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## [Exchange Fund Bills tender results](#)

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

Exchange Fund Bills tender results:

Tender date	: December 24, 2019
Paper on offer	: EF Bills
Issue number	: Q1952
Issue date	: December 27, 2019
Maturity date	: March 25, 2020
Amount applied	: HK\$91,300 MN
Amount allotted	: HK\$44,063 MN
Average yield accepted	: 2.03 PCT
Highest yield accepted	: 2.11 PCT
Pro rata ratio	: About 9 PCT
Average tender yield	: 2.19 PCT

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Tender date : December 24, 2019  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : H1981  
Issue date : December 27, 2019  
Maturity date : June 24, 2020  
Amount applied : HK\$39,350 MN  
Amount allotted : HK\$9,000 MN  
Average yield accepted : 1.96 PCT  
Highest yield accepted : 1.97 PCT  
Pro rata ratio : About 48 PCT  
Average tender yield : 2.05 PCT

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Tender date : December 24, 2019  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : Y1998  
Issue date : December 27, 2019  
Maturity date : December 23, 2020  
Amount applied : HK\$14,030 MN  
Amount allotted : HK\$2,100 MN  
Average yield accepted : 1.82 PCT  
Highest yield accepted : 1.83 PCT  
Pro rata ratio : About 56 PCT  
Average tender yield : 1.92 PCT

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## **SFH concludes Beijing visit (with photos)**

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, today (December 24) started the second day of her visit to Beijing. She met with the Minister of the General Administration of Customs (GAC), Mr Ni Yuefeng, and officials of the GAC. They exchanged views on issues related to food safety and supply, including prevention and control of African Swine Fever as well as maintaining a steady supply of live pigs from the Mainland.

During the meeting, Professor Chan also witnessed the signing of a collaboration arrangement on e-certificates between the Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and GAC. The arrangement aims to establish an effective transfer mechanism for e-certificates, fostering collaboration on data exchange of quarantine

certificates between both sides as well as stepping up gate-keeping work on food safety.

Professor Chan said, "We will continue to strengthen the exchange and co-operation with GAC in order to refine the arrangement of verifying health certificates by food regulating authorities of the two sides with a view to further safeguarding the safety of food supplied to Hong Kong."

The Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food), Mr Philip Yung, and the Acting Controller of the Centre for Food Safety of the FEHD, Dr Edwin Tsui, accompanied Professor Chan to attend the meeting. They concluded the visit and will return to Hong Kong in the evening.



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## [Appointments to Honours and Non-official Justices of the Peace Selection Committee](#)

The Government announced today (December 24) that the Chief Executive has appointed Mrs Laura Cha Shih May-lung, Mr Chow Chung-kong, Mr Martin Liao Cheung-kong, Dr Moses Cheng Mo-chi and Dr Ng Chau-pei as non-official members of the Honours and Non-official Justices of the Peace Selection Committee.

The Chief Executive has also re-appointed Mr Bernard Charnwut Chan, Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk-ye, Miss Elsie Leung Oi-sie and Mr Lau Chin-shek as non-official members of the Selection Committee.

"All members will serve for a one-year term, starting from January 1 to December 31, 2020," a Government spokesman said.

Professor Arthur Li Kwok-cheung, Mrs Fanny Law Fan Chiu-fun, Mr Joseph Yam Chi-kwong and Mr Cheng Yiu-tong, serving members of the Selection

Committee, will retire on December 31, 2019.

"We wish to express our gratitude to Professor Li, Mrs Law, Mr Yam and Mr Cheng for their invaluable advice rendered to the Selection Committee during their term of office," the spokesman said.

The Selection Committee is tasked to consider nominations for various honours as well as for the appointment of Non-official Justices of the Peace (JPs) and make recommendations to the Chief Executive.

Honours and awards are awarded to individuals in recognition of their significant contribution to Hong Kong or dedicated public and community service. The appointment of JPs is governed by the Justices of the Peace Ordinance (Cap. 510). JPs are required to perform certain functions, including visiting custodial institutions or detention centres to ensure that such facilities are effectively managed and that no inmate is unfairly treated or deprived of his or her rights.

The annual Honours List and the list of new JP appointments are normally published in the Government Gazette on the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day (July 1).

The Selection Committee is chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration. Other official members include the Financial Secretary, the Secretary for Home Affairs, the Chairman of the Public Service Commission and the Director of the Chief Executive's Office.

The Selection Committee's full membership for the new term is as follows:

Chairman

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Chief Secretary for Administration

Non-official Members

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Mr Bernard Charnwut Chan  
Mrs Laura Cha Shih May-lung  
Mr Chow Chung-kong  
Mr Martin Liao Cheung-kong  
Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk-yee  
Miss Elsie Leung Oi-sie  
Dr Moses Cheng Mo-chi  
Dr Ng Chau-pei  
Mr Lau Chin-shek

Official Members

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Financial Secretary  
Secretary for Home Affairs  
Chairman, Public Service Commission

## **Fraudulent websites related to Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited**

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited on fraudulent websites, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the websites concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the websites should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.