

Correctional officers stop fighting among remand persons in custody

Correctional Officers at Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre stopped a fight among remand persons in custody today (December 23).

At 3.53pm today, fourteen male remand persons in custody aged from 21 to 37 engaged in a fight inside a dayroom. Officer at the scene immediately stopped the fight and called for reinforcements.

One of the remand persons in custody sustained injury to his foot and was referred to a public hospital for further treatment after treatment by the institution Medical Officer. Another nine remand persons in custody involved sustained minor injuries to faces, hands, etc. respectively. After examination and treatment provided by the institution Medical Officer, they did not need to be sent to public hospital. The remaining four remand persons in custody did not sustain any injuries.

The case has been reported to the Police for investigation.

The fourteen remand persons in custody were respectively remanded for the offence of robbery, trafficking in a dangerous drug, burglary, etc.

HKSAR Young People to Work at the United Nations

The Launch Ceremony of the First Batch of HKSAR Junior Professional Officers Recommended by the Central Government of the PRC to the United Nations was held today (December 23) at the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (OCMFA) to mark the occasion of five Hong Kong young people taking up positions in different agencies of the United Nations (UN).

With the support of the Central People's Government and the assistance of the OCMFA, five young public officers from the Administration Wing, Hong Kong Observatory and Electrical and Mechanical Services Department of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), as well as the Independent Commission Against Corruption have been recommended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to participate in the UN Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme. The UN is composed of sovereign states and participants of the programme must be sent by member states.

This is the first time that the HKSAR has taken part in the JPO Programme. It is a major breakthrough for Hong Kong's conduct of external affairs and for young people from Hong Kong to enter the international arena.

The five Hong Kong young people will be working in the UN offices in New York, United States, Geneva, Switzerland, and Vienna, Austria as Chinese personnel. They are expected to report duty to the UN next year for a two-year tenure.

The HKSAR Government attaches great importance to youth development and is committed to facilitating young people to widen their horizons outside Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government has seconded civil servants to work in international organisations. Hong Kong young public officers being recommended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to work in different UN agencies on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China carries special significance.

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, said during the ceremony that, "under the 'one country, two systems' principle, we enjoy the unique advantages of being backed by the Motherland and open to the world. Based on the principle of 'one country', Hong Kong young public officers can enter the UN as Chinese personnel, shouldering the international obligations and sharing the glory of the rising international status of our country. Owing to the advantages under 'two systems', Hong Kong as Asia's World City has nurtured young talents with global vision and multicultural exchange capability."

The Chief Executive encouraged the five young people to work in the UN agencies with passion for making contributions to the world. At the same time, the HKSAR Government will continue to proactively develop external affairs in accordance with the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

Visa-free access to Uzbekistan for HKSAR passport holders

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has received notification from the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Uzbekistan) that with effect from January 1, 2020, HKSAR passport holders may visit Uzbekistan visa-free for a stay of up to seven days entering through the international airports with a return air ticket.

An Immigration Department spokesman said, "Uzbekistan is along the Belt and Road. Under the Belt and Road Initiative, this visa-free arrangement

would bring greater travel convenience to the travellers of Hong Kong and strengthen the tourism, cultural and economic ties between the two places."

Including Uzbekistan, 167 countries and territories have granted visa-free access or visa-on-arrival to HKSAR passport holders. Please visit the following website for details:

www.immd.gov.hk/eng/service/travel_document/visa_free_access.html

or scan the attached code.

Excessive cadmium found in celery and Chinese cabbage samples

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (December 23) announced that a celery sample and two Chinese cabbage samples were detected with cadmium, a metallic contaminant, exceeding the legal limits. The CFS is following up on the incidents.

"The CFS collected the abovementioned celery sample and Chinese cabbage samples from a stall at the Western Wholesale Food Market and at the import level respectively for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test results showed that the celery sample contained cadmium at a level of 0.18 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the legal limit of 0.1ppm, while both the Chinese cabbage samples contained cadmium at levels of 0.1 ppm, exceeding the legal limit of 0.05 ppm," a CFS spokesman said.

"The CFS has informed the vendors concerned of the irregularities and is tracing the sources of the affected products," the spokesman added.

According to the Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations (Cap 132V), any person who sells food with metallic contamination above the legal limits is liable upon conviction to a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

"Based on the levels of cadmium detected in the samples, adverse health effects will not be caused under usual consumption," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incidents and take appropriate action. An investigation is ongoing.

Hong Kong Customs reminds public not to bring cannabis products from overseas into Hong Kong (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs today (December 23) reminded members of the public that they should pay attention to whether the products they purchase when travelling overseas during the Christmas and New Year holidays contain cannabis or controlled cannabinoids (such as tetrahydro-cannabinol, or THC) since illicit import of such products is a criminal offence. They are urged not to break the law.

Customs noted that individual overseas jurisdictions have earlier legalised recreational use of cannabis. Products containing cannabis or controlled cannabinoids (such as THC) in different forms, including food, drinks and topical products for applying to skin, hair or nails, as well as cannabis extracts, may be available for sale at local stores. Members of the public are reminded that cannabis and THC are controlled dangerous drugs in Hong Kong and it is a criminal offence to bring such products into the city.

Customs stresses that it spares no effort to tackle dangerous drug trafficking and takes rigorous enforcement action in accordance with Hong Kong's laws. Cannabis and THC (a major cannabinoid present in cannabis plants) are dangerous drugs controlled under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134). All products that contain cannabis or THC are also controlled under Cap. 134.

From January to November this year, Customs detected a total of 20 import cases of products containing cannabis through postal parcel, express courier or passenger channels with seizures including candies, shampoo, skin lotion and electronic vape pens.

Members of the public should pay attention to the packaging labels of the products concerned while making purchases in foreign places as well as the relevant domestic legislation in relation to cannabis, so as to avoid breaching the law inadvertently.

Under Cap. 134, trafficking in dangerous drugs, or illicitly importing to and exporting from Hong Kong, procuring, supplying, manufacturing, or dealing in or with dangerous drugs, constitutes a criminal offence. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment and a fine of \$5 million. Illicitly possessing or smoking, inhaling, ingesting or injecting dangerous drugs is subject to a maximum penalty of imprisonment for seven years and a fine of \$1 million.

Customs has all along been closely monitoring the trends concerning dangerous drugs in other places and implements appropriate strategies. Stringent law enforcement is imposed on passenger and cargo clearance, including air postal packets and express cargo, to effectively combat drug

trafficking activities and interdict the flow of dangerous drugs into Hong Kong.

Customs also appeals members of the public to report any suspected illicit drug-related activities through Customs' 24-hour telephone hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

