

[Hong Kong Customs detects largest illicit cigarette case in past three years \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs today (November 21) seized about 11.4 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$31 million and a duty potential of about \$21 million in Tai Po. This is the largest illicit cigarette case detected by Customs in the past three years.

During an anti-illicit cigarette operation in Tai Po this morning, Customs officers seized the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes from a metal shed and arrested three men aged between 28 and 49.

Investigation is ongoing.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying illicit cigarettes commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may report any suspected illicit cigarette activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[Surface letter mail service to Costa Rica discontinued](#)

Hongkong Post announced today (November 21) that the postal administration of Costa Rica has discontinued the incoming surface letter mail service. The surface letter mail service to Costa Rica will cease with

immediate effect.

Company fined and director sentenced to suspended imprisonment for contravening Employment Ordinance

Skilland Engineering Services (HK) Limited and its director were prosecuted by the Labour Department (LD) for failing to pay wages and defaulting on the sums awarded by the Labour Tribunal (LT) to an employee, contrary to the Employment Ordinance (EO).

The company and its director pleaded guilty earlier at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts. The company was fined \$25,000 and its director was sentenced to two months' imprisonment suspended for two years today (November 21). In addition, the company was ordered to pay an outstanding sum of \$60,000 to the employee concerned via the court.

The company failed to pay an employee's wages within seven days after the expiry of wage periods or the date of termination of employment, and the awarded sum of \$60,000 within 14 days after the date of the LT award as required by the EO. The director concerned was prosecuted and convicted for his consent, connivance or neglect in the above offences committed by the company.

"The ruling helps disseminate a strong message to all employers, directors and responsible officers of companies that they have to pay wages to employees within the time limit stipulated in the EO and to pay the awarded sums according to the LT or the Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board," an LD spokesman said.

"The LD will not tolerate these offences and will spare no effort in enforcing the law and safeguarding employees' statutory rights," the spokesman added.

Suspected MERS case reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (November 21) reported a suspected case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they

visit. The case is detailed below:

Sex	Female
Age	62
Affected area involved	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Nil
Hospital	Princess Margaret Hospital
Condition	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Pending

"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Locally, the CHP's surveillance with public and private hospitals, with practising doctors and at boundary control points is firmly in place. Inbound travellers and members of the public who recently visited the Middle East and developed relevant symptoms within 14 days will be classified as suspected MERS cases. They will be taken to public hospitals for isolation and management until their specimens test negative for MERS-CoV.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS pages of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), MERS statistics in [affected areas](#), the CHP's [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the World Health Organization's [latest news](#) for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's [health advice on MERS](#).

[HA General Outpatient Clinic service arrangements](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson of the Hospital Authority today (November 21) announced

the following service arrangements:

Out of safety concerns for patients and staff members, tonight's evening services of Yuen Long Jockey Club Health Centre will be temporarily suspended. Patients with appointments are advised to make a new appointment later. The other 23 clinics (see attached table) providing evening services will close upon completion of booked appointments.