

Hong Kong Customs combats illicit cigarette activities (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs on June 18 and yesterday (June 19) seized about 250 000 suspected illicit heat-not-burn (HNB) products with an estimated market value of about \$700,000 and a duty potential of about \$500,000 at Hong Kong International Airport and in Sham Shui Po and Tai Kok Tsui.

Customs officers detected three cases of suspected illicit cigarette storage and distribution and seized the batch of suspected illicit HNB products inside a hand-carry bag of an arriving male passenger at Hong Kong International Airport, a shop in Sham Shui Po and a private car in Tai Kok Tsui.

During the operation, Customs officers arrested three men, aged between 31 and 57, and detained a cross-boundary private car suspected to be in connection with the case. Customs believes an HNB product smuggling syndicate was smashed.

Investigation is ongoing.

Customs is mounting a territory-wide anti-illicit cigarette operation codenamed "Net II" from June this year with a view to combating illicit cigarette activities on all fronts through a multi-pronged approach. The operation is ongoing.

Customs reminds members of the public that 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 (DCO), tobacco is among the dutiable goods to which the DCO applies. Any HNB product containing tobacco in content is also a dutiable item subject to the control of the DCO. Any person who possesses, sells or buys dutiable commodities without a valid license commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may call Customs' hotline 2815 7711 regarding whether a specific tobacco or smoking product is under the regulation of the DCO. They may also report any suspected violation of the DCO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



Missing man in Kwai Chung located

A man who went missing in Kwai Chung has been located.

Ma Ka-chi, aged 71, went missing after he left a hostel on Lai Chi Ling Road on June 18 noon. The staff of the hostel made a report to Police on the same day.

The man was located in the Central District this afternoon (June 20). He sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

CHP investigates case of invasive meningococcal infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (June 20) investigating a case of invasive meningococcal infection, a communicable disease transmitted by direct contact with droplets from carriers or infected persons.

The case involves a 41-year-old man, with good past health, who presented with fever, vomiting and headache since June 10. He attended the Accident and Emergency Department at Tuen Mun Hospital on June 16 and 17 and was subsequently admitted for further management on June 17. His blood sample tested positive for *Neisseria meningitidis* upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was meningococcal meningitis with bacteremia. The patient is now in a stable condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had visited Shenzhen during the incubation period. His three sons have developed fever recently and will

be referred to hospital for further assessment. His other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far. The CHP's investigation is continuing.

"Meningococcal infection is caused by a bacterium known as meningococcus. It is mainly transmitted by direct contact through respiratory secretions, including droplets from the nose and throat, from infected persons. The incubation period varies from two to 10 days, and is commonly three or four days," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The clinical picture may vary. Severe illness may result when the bacteria invade the bloodstream (meningococcaemia) or the membranes that envelop the brain and spinal cord (meningococcal meningitis).

Meningococcaemia is characterised by sudden onset of fever, intense headache, purpura, shock and even death in severe cases. Meningococcal meningitis is characterised by high fever, severe headache and stiff neck followed by drowsiness, vomiting, fear of bright light, or a rash. It can cause brain damage or even death. The brain damage may lead to intellectual impairment, mental retardation, hearing loss and electrolyte imbalance. Invasive meningococcal infections can be complicated by arthritis, inflammation of the heart muscle, inflammation of the posterior chamber of the eye or chest infection.

Meningococcal infection is a serious illness. Patients should be treated promptly with antibiotics.

To prevent meningococcal infection, members of the public are advised to take heed of the following measures:

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly, especially when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, e.g. after sneezing, and clean hands with alcohol-based handrub when they are not visibly soiled;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing, hold the spit with a tissue, dispose of nasal and mouth discharges in a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands immediately;
- Avoid crowded places;
- Avoid close contact with patients who have fever or severe headache;
- Travellers to high-risk areas may consult doctors for meningococcal vaccination; and
- Travellers returning from high-risk areas should seek medical advice if they become ill and should discuss their recent travel history with their doctor.

The public may visit the CHP's [website](#) for more information on meningococcal infection.

CHP investigates case of measles infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (June 20) investigating a case of measles infection.

The case involves a 32-year-old woman with good past health, who has developed fever since June 12 and rash since June 15. She sought medical advice from a general practitioner on June 15 and attended the Accident and Emergency Department at United Christian Hospital on June 18 and was admitted for treatment on the same day.

A laboratory test of her respiratory specimen was positive for the measles virus. She has been in a stable condition all along. The patient's measles vaccination history is unknown. She had no travel history during the incubation period and the communicable period.

The patient is the wife of a previously confirmed case (33-year-old man) announced on June 5. Her other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far and have been put under medical surveillance.

Upon notification of the case, the CHP immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. Investigations are ongoing. The public places the patient visited during the communicable period are listed in the appendix.

A spokesman for the DH said, "Those who might have had contact with the patient during the period of communicability are urged to observe if they have developed measles-related symptoms, and to seek medical treatment immediately if such symptoms appear. If they need to visit any health care facilities during the period of medical surveillance, they should also report whether they have symptoms and prior measles exposure history to the healthcare workers so that appropriate infection control measures can be implemented at the healthcare facilities concerned to prevent any potential spread."

The spokesman explained that measles is a highly infectious disease caused by the measles virus. It can be transmitted by airborne droplets or direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, and, less commonly, by articles soiled with nose and throat secretions. A patient can pass the disease to other persons from four days before to four days after the appearance of skin rash.

"The incubation period (the period from infection to appearance of illness) of measles ranges from seven days to 21 days. Symptoms of measles include fever, skin rash, cough, runny nose and red eyes. If symptoms arise, members of the public should wear surgical masks, stop going to work or school and avoid going to crowded places. They should also avoid contact with non-immune persons, especially persons with weakened immunity, pregnant women

and children aged below 1. Those suspected to have been infected are advised to seek medical attention as early as possible and reveal relevant contact history of measles to healthcare professionals," the spokesman advised.

"Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles. Members of the public who are planning to travel to places with high incidence or outbreaks of measles should review their vaccination history and past medical history, especially people born outside Hong Kong who might not have received measles vaccination during childhood. The history of measles vaccination in Hong Kong is available in the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). Those who have not received two doses of measles-containing vaccines, with unknown vaccination history or unknown immunity against measles are urged to consult their doctor for advice on vaccination at least two weeks before departure," the spokesman said.

Besides being vaccinated against measles, members of the public should take the following measures to prevent infection:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Wash hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;
- Clean used toys and furniture properly; and
- Persons with measles should be kept out of school till four days from the appearance of rash to prevent spread of the infection to non-immune persons in school.

For more information on measles, the public may call the 24-hour health education hotline 2833 0111 or visit the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). For outbreak news of measles outside Hong Kong or the latest travel health advice, please visit the website of DH's [Travel Health Service](#).

[Phishing emails related to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation 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 The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited on phishing emails, 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 emails concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the emails 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.