

Company responsible person fined \$84,000 for contravening Employment Ordinance

A responsible person of Bilok Educational Organisation Limited was prosecuted by the Labour Department (LD) for violation of the requirements under the Employment Ordinance (EO). The responsible person pleaded guilty at the Shatin Magistrates' Courts today (October 4) and was fined a total sum of \$84,000.

The company wilfully and without reasonable excuse contravened the requirement of EO, failing to pay 11 employees wages within seven days after the expiry of the wage periods, totalling about \$484,000. The responsible person concerned was prosecuted and convicted for her consent, connivance or neglect in the above offences.

"The ruling helps disseminate a strong message to all employers, directors, managers and responsible persons of companies that they have to pay wages to employees within the statutory time limit stipulated in the EO," a spokesman for the LD 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.

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be

supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on October 3 to noon today (October 4), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 285 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" (www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24, 2023, to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 89 781 samples of food imported from Japan (including 57 308 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 20 256 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

CE and Principal Officials receive seasonal influenza and COVID-19 vaccines (with photos)

The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, led a number of Principal Officials to receive seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) today (October 4) and called on members of the public to get vaccinated early for better protection before the winter influenza season. Mr Lee and some of the officials also received COVID-19 booster concurrently.

Mr Lee said, "Vaccination is one of the most effective means for

preventing seasonal influenza and its complications, as well as reducing the risks of hospitalisation and death arising from influenza. It is now the best timing for receiving SIV for effective protection in the coming year against the influenza strains predicted by the World Health Organization in preparation for the impending winter and summer influenza seasons. I strongly appeal to members of the public to seize this best timing for vaccination and get vaccinated as early as possible.

"Through the concerted efforts of various stakeholders in the community under the leadership of the Government, a total of 1.87 million SIV doses were administered under various government vaccination programmes in the 2023/24 season, achieving a record high with around 20 per cent increase from that of the 2022/23 season. I hope that the vaccination rate in this season can reach even greater heights so as to build a more robust protection barrier in society to safeguard citizens' health.

"Moreover, individuals of high-risk priority groups should also receive an additional COVID-19 booster six months after the last dose or COVID-19 infection (whichever is later) to enhance protection and reduce the risks of serious complications and death."

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, who had received SIV and COVID-19 vaccination last week, was also present to show support today. He said, "Various SIV programmes commenced on September 26 to provide free or subsidised SIV for eligible persons. I once again urge members of the public to act now and receive SIV in October."

Professor Lo added, "To boost the SIV coverage rate among schoolchildren, special arrangements have been made under the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach Programme this year to offer a more flexible choice of vaccine options for kindergartens and childcare centres. They can choose both injectable inactivated influenza vaccines and live attenuated influenza vaccines (LAIV) (i.e. nasal vaccines) for the same or different outreach vaccination activities. Furthermore, the Department of Health (DH) rolled out a pilot scheme in which LAIV will be provided for the first time to primary and secondary schools that had indicated earlier this year their preference for arranging LAIV for their students. Schools that have yet to join the outreach vaccination programme should enrol as soon as possible and do their part to provide the best protection for schoolchildren."

To offer members of the public greater convenience for receiving SIV this year, the Government specifically designated a number of additional vaccination venues for citizens' selection, including enabling children aged six months to under two years to get vaccinated in the Maternal and Child Health Centres of the DH, and providing vaccination services for eligible persons at District Health Centres (DHCs)/District Health Centre Expresses (DHCEs) across the city. The list of vaccination venues is available at the [SIV page of the Centre for Health Protection \(CHP\) of the DH](#). Eligible persons who wish to receive SIV at DHCs/DHCEs may make reservation for vaccination on the websites of DHCs/DHCEs or by phone. For details, please

visit the webpage (www.dhc.gov.hk/en/siv.html).

Members of the public may call the CHP at 2125 2125 or visit the [Vaccination Schemes page](#) for more information.



Red flag lowered at Stanley Main Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department said today (October 4) that the red flag at Stanley Main Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island, has been lowered.

The red flag was hoisted earlier due to big waves.

Postal services to Lao People's Democratic Republic return to normal

Hongkong Post announced today (October 4) that, as advised by the postal administration of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, mail delivery services to Luang Namtha province with postcode 03000 previously impacted by flooding have returned to normal.