

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected smuggled platinum worth about \$10 million (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs on September 13 seized eight platinum slabs, weighing about 41 kilograms in total, with an estimated market value of about \$10 million, at the Man Kam To Control Point. This is the largest platinum-smuggling case detected by Customs on record in terms of the seizure weight and value.

Based on risk assessment, Customs on that day intercepted an outbound goods vehicle declared to be empty at the Man Kam To Control Point for inspection. Upon examination, Customs officers seized the batch of suspected smuggled platinum in the empty space of the vehicle's battery compartment. The 48-year-old male driver was subsequently arrested.

An investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to take stringent enforcement actions against cross-boundary smuggling activities through risk assessment and intelligence analysis.

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.

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Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).



Decision on application for variation of licence by Greater Bay Airlines Company Limited

â€‹The following is issued on behalf of the Air Transport Licensing Authority:

The Air Transport Licensing Authority has decided to approve the licence variation in relation to the application made by Greater Bay Airlines Company Limited with effect from today (September 19) until February 20, 2027 (both dates inclusive).

Under the varied licence, Greater Bay Airlines Company Limited may operate scheduled journeys for the carriage in Hong Kong of passengers, cargo or mail on the following routes at unlimited frequency from and to Hong Kong International Airport:

Shanghai/ Beijing/ Hangzhou/ Chengdu/ Nanjing/ Xiamen/ Haikou/ Fuzhou/ Quanzhou/ Ningbo/ Tianjin/ Chongqing/ Wuhan/ Wuxi/ Kunming/ Xian/ Sanya/ Jinan/ Dalian/ Qingdao/ Guiyang/ Nanning/ Shenyang/ Zhanjiang/ Nanchang/ Zhengzhou/ Changsha/ Yantai/ Yinchuan/ Wenzhou/ Wuyishan/ Guangzhou/ Changchun/ Yancheng/ Taiyuan/ Hefei/ Lanzhou/ Shijiazhuang/ Harbin/ Urumqi/ Tangshan/ Hohhot/ Suzhou/ Nantong/ Changzhou/ Xuzhou/ Weifang/ Ezhou/ Taipei/ Kaohsiung/ Taichung/ Tainan/ Tokyo/ Osaka/ Okinawa/ Fukuoka/ Sapporo/ Nagoya/ Kagoshima/ Ishigaki/ Takamatsu/ Hiroshima/ Nagasaki/ Okayama/ Yonago/ Seoul/ Busan/ Jeju/ Daegu/ Bangkok/ Phuket/ Chiang Mai/ Koh Samui/ Krabi/ Chiang Rai/ Singapore/ Manila/ Clark/ Cebu/ Iloilo/ Davao/ Jakarta/ Denpasar/ Surabaya/ Medan/ Kuala Lumpur/ Kota Kinabalu/ Penang/ Ho Chi Minh City/ Hanoi/ Da Nang/ Nha Trang/ Phu Quoc/ Phnom Penh/ Siem Reap/ Yangon/ Bandar Seri Begawan/ Vientiane/ Kolkata/ Kathmandu/ Dhaka/ Ulaanbaatar/ Saipan/ Guam/ Beihai/ Datong/ Dunhuang/ Enshi/ Guilin/ Hailar/ Huai'an/ Huangshan/ Jiamusi/ Jiuzhaigou/ Kashi/ Lhasa/ Lianyungang/ Lijiang/ Linyi/ Luoyang/ Mangshi/ Manzhouli/ Mudanjiang/ Ordos/ Qiqihaer/ Shangri-la/ Shantou/ Wanzhou/ Weihai/ Xichang/ Xining/ Xinzhou/ Xishuangbanna/ Yangzhou/ Yanji/ Yichang/ Yiwu/ Yulin/ Zhangjiajie/ Zhoushan/ Zunyi/ Hualien/ Akita/ Amami/ Aomori/ Asahikawa/ Fukushima/ Hakodate/ Hanamaki/ Ibaraki (Hyakuri)/ Izumo/ Kitakyushu/ Kobe/ Kochi Ryoma/ Komatsu/ Kumamoto/ Kushiro/ Matsumoto/ Matsuyama/ Miyakojima/ Miyazaki/ Niigata/ Obihiro/ Oita/ Sendai/ Shimojishima/ Shirahama/ Shizuoka/ Tokushima/ Tottori/ Toyama/ Yamagata/ Yamaguchi/ Kuching/ Colombo/ Male

The decision of the Authority will be published in the Gazette on September 27.

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 September 17 to noon today (September 19), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 259 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category, in the past two days. 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 100 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 85 125 samples of food imported from Japan (including 54 427 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 19 504 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

ICAC Regional Office (New Territories North West) temporarily closed for urgent repairs

The following press release is issued on behalf of the Independent Commission Against Corruption:

The ICAC Regional Office (New Territories North West) at G/F, Fu Hing Building, 230 Castle Peak Road – Yuen Long, Yuen Long, New Territories, is temporarily closed from 3.30pm today (September 19) for urgent repairs. The office is expected to reopen next Monday (September 23).

During the temporary closure of the office, members of the public may lodge corruption complaints or make enquiries through the following channels:

- calling the ICAC's 24-hour report corruption hotline 25 266 366;
- visiting the ICAC Report Centre (24-hour service) in the ICAC Building at 303 Java Road, North Point; or
- calling or visiting other ICAC Regional Offices during office hours (9am – 7pm, Mondays to Fridays except public holidays) (Contact details of Regional Offices are at www.icac.org.hk/en/rc/channel/ro/index.html).

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, September 19, 2024 is 103.3 (down 0.3 against Tuesday's index).