

Hong Kong Customs detects suspected gold-smuggling case by air cargo worth about \$13 million (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs on July 3 detected a suspected gold-smuggling case involving air cargo and seized about 22 kilograms of suspected gold with an estimated market value of about \$13 million at Hong Kong International Airport.

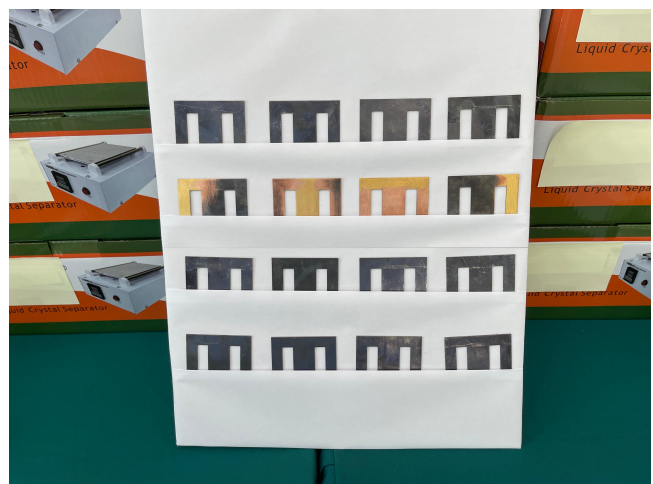
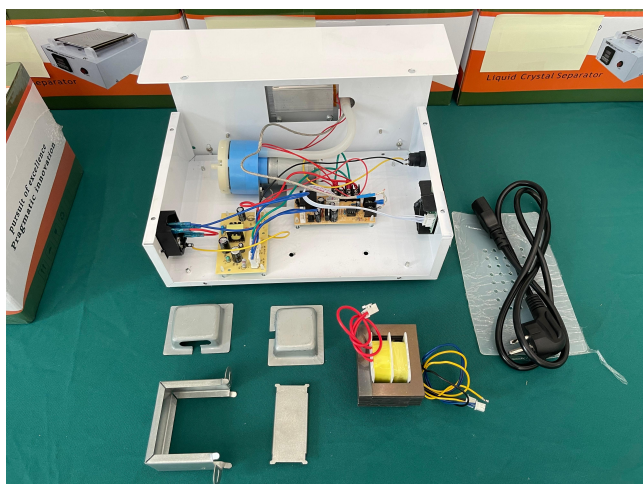
Based on risk assessment, Customs on that day examined an outbound air cargo consignment, declared as carrying screen separators departing for Japan, at the Customs Cargo Examination Compound at the airport. Upon inspection, Customs officers found a batch of suspected smuggled gold, which was moulded and camouflaged as transformer parts, concealed in the transformers of screen separators.

An investigation is still ongoing.

Customs will continue to take stringent enforcement actions against all kinds of 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.

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).



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 July 10 to noon today (July 11), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 256 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 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 66 949 samples of food imported from Japan (including 43 063 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 15 992 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, July 11, 2024 is 106.6 (same as yesterday's index).

LCSD to set up Olympics Focal Site

The 2024 Paris Olympic Games and Paralympic Games will be held soon. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will set up Olympics Focal Site at designated sports centres in 18 districts to broadcast the Games' competitions, allowing members of the public to experience the excitement of this spectacular sports event and show support for the national team and Hong Kong athletes participating in the Games.

The Paris Olympic Games will be held from July 26 to August 11 (Paris time). Due to time zone differences, the 18 Olympics Focal Sites will be open from July 27 (Hong Kong time) until the end of the Games. The opening hours will be from 8am to 11pm. To enable the public to visit the Focal Sites and watch the Games, information of the actual opening times of the Focal Sites will be announced on the [dedicated website](#). Interested parties are welcome to check for the updated schedule. Details of the broadcasting arrangements for the Paralympic Games will be announced on the dedicated website later.

Exhibition panels featuring Hong Kong athletes participating in the Games will also be displayed at the Olympics Focal Site. Members of the public are invited to visit the exhibition. Locations are set out in the Annex.

To continue encouraging the public to take part in sports while having fun in watching the Games, the LCSD has set up a [dedicated website](#) to facilitate members of the public's access to information of the Olympics Focal Site. A series of Olympic Games sports videos, which feature introduction and demonstration of sports skills by elite athletes, have been uploaded to the website to allow members of the public to experience the joyful atmosphere while watching the Games.

Moreover, the LCSD will hold the launching ceremony of the Olympics Focal Site at 5pm on July 26 at the Secondary Hall of the Kowloon Park Sports Centre. The programme will include sharing sessions with Hong Kong athletes, sports demonstrations and participation activities. Interested parties are welcome to join the event. Members of the public are also welcome to watch the live webcast of the launching ceremony via the [dedicated website](#), the

"[LCSD Plusss](#)" Facebook page and the [Vis-à-vis +01](#) of the LCSD Edutainment Channel.

In addition, to drum up public support for the Games and encourage active participation in sports, the LCSD will serve as a venue partner to support the "JC Fit City – Active 8 Olympic Sports is Live Experience", which is co-organised by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and the InspiringHK Sports Foundation. This activity will be held during the Games to encourage the public to watch the Games at the Focal Sites as well as experience sports for free. Details will be announced on the relevant [website](#).

CFS follows up on aquatic products imported from Japan suspected of breaching Food Safety Order

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (July 11) that aquatic products from regulated Japanese prefectures were suspected to be in breach of the relevant Food Safety Order when the CFS inspected food imported from Japan. The products concerned have been marked and sealed by the CFS and have not entered the market. The CFS is following up on the cases.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "During inspections of the consignments of food concerned imported from Japan, the CFS found a pack of chilled tuna processed in Niigata Prefecture and 15 boxes of chilled sea urchin manufactured in Miyagi Prefecture after the Order was issued. The importers concerned are thus suspected of breaching the relevant Order."

According to the Order, all aquatic products originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, are prohibited from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong if they are harvested, manufactured, processed or packed on or after August 24, 2023, including all live, chilled, frozen, dried or otherwise preserved aquatic products, sea salt, and unprocessed or processed seaweed.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incidents and take appropriate action, including informing the Japanese authorities concerned of the incidents. Prosecution will be instituted against the importers concerned should there be sufficient evidence. The investigation is ongoing.