

Incoming passenger convicted and jailed for importing duty-not-paid cigarettes and alternative smoking products (with photo)

An incoming male passenger was sentenced to eight months' imprisonment at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today (May 16) for importing duty-not-paid cigarettes and alternative smoking products, in contravention of the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO) and the Import and Export Ordinance (IEO).

Customs officer arrested a 49-year-old incoming male passenger at Hong Kong International Airport on February 17. A total of about 25 000 duty-not-paid cigarettes and about 113 000 alternative smoking products, with an estimated market value of about \$420,000 and a duty potential of about \$83,000 in total, were seized from his personal baggage.

Customs welcomes the sentence. The custodial sentence has imposed a considerable deterrent effect and reflects the seriousness of the offences.

Under the DCO, tobacco products are dutiable goods to which the DCO applies. Any person who deals with, possesses, sells or buys duty-not-paid tobacco commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Under the IEO, any person who imports an alternative smoking product into Hong Kong commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

Members of the public may report any suspected illicit cigarette activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/en).



Fraudulent website and internet banking login screen related to Shanghai Commercial Bank 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 Shanghai Commercial Bank Limited relating to a fraudulent website and an internet banking login screen, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the website or login screen concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

16 persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations (with photo)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a series of territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations codenamed "Greenlane", "Lightshadow", and "Twilight", and joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion" and "Windsand", for four consecutive days from May 12 to yesterday (May 15). A total of 10 suspected illegal workers, four suspected employers and two overstayers were arrested.

During the anti-illegal worker operations, ImmD Task Force officers raided 70 target locations including an exhibition hall, residential buildings and restaurants. Ten suspected illegal workers and four suspected employers were arrested. The arrested suspected illegal workers comprised six

men and four women, aged 27 to 57. Among them, two women were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. In addition, one man and one woman were also suspected of using and being in possession of a forged Hong Kong identity card; one woman was suspected of using and being in possession of a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. One man and three women, aged 35 to 61, were suspected of employing the illegal workers and were also arrested.

During operation "Champion", enforcement officers raided 72 target locations in Central, Eastern and Mong Kok districts. Two overstayers were arrested. The arrested overstayers comprised two women, aged 31 and 53.

An ImmD spokesman said, "Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him or her shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties."

The spokesman warned, "As stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, an illegal immigrant, a person who is the subject of a removal order or a deportation order, an overstayer or a person who was refused permission to land is prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. As stipulated in section 20(1)(a) of the Immigration Ordinance, the Chief Executive may make a deportation order against an immigrant, prohibiting the immigrant from being in Hong Kong at any time thereafter if the immigrant has been found guilty in Hong Kong of an offence punishable by imprisonment for not less than two years. Under the prevailing laws, it is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$100,000 and up to 10 years' imprisonment."

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. Under the Immigration Ordinance, the maximum penalty for an employer employing a person who is not lawfully employable, i.e. an illegal immigrant, a person who is the subject of a removal order or a deportation order, an overstayer or a person who was refused permission to land, has been significantly increased from a fine of \$350,000 and three years' imprisonment to a fine of \$500,000 and 10 years' imprisonment to reflect the gravity of such offences. The director, manager, secretary, partner, etc, of the company concerned may also bear criminal liability. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence.

According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the

lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$150,000 and to imprisonment for one year. In that connection, the spokesman would like to remind all employers not to defy the law by employing illegal workers. The ImmD will continue to take resolute enforcement action to combat such offences.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct an initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the ImmD officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threats and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter or temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments immediately.



Jiangsu Guofu Hydrogen Energy Equipment Co Ltd to establish international headquarters and R&D centre in Hong Kong to provide

hydrogen energy solutions (with photos)

One of the strategic enterprises under the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES), Jiangsu Guofu Hydrogen Energy Equipment Co Ltd, officially inaugurated its Hong Kong office (Guofu Hydrogen Energy (Hong Kong) Development Co Limited) today (May 16). Guofu Hydrogen Energy plans to establish its international headquarters and research and development platform in Hong Kong, leveraging the city's strengths as an international financial centre and innovation and technology (I&T) hub to expand its hydrogen energy business and related solutions.

The Deputy Chief Manager (Advanced Manufacturing and New Energy Technology) of OASES, Mr Eric Leung, attended the inauguration ceremony and stated, "As the world transitions to a low-carbon economy, Hong Kong is committed to promoting sustainable development and the application of green energy technologies. Guofu Hydrogen Energy's decision to establish its international headquarters and R&D platform in Hong Kong not only underscores the city's dedication to green and new energy technology development but also further affirms its role as a bridge connecting the Mainland and international markets."

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The President of Jiangsu Guofu Hydrogen Energy Equipment Co Ltd, Mr Wu Pinfang, said, "Hong Kong boasts a well-established legal system, an excellent business environment, and unique advantages in connecting the Mainland with global markets, making it an ideal choice for our business expansion. At present, Guofu Hydrogen Energy is leveraging Hong Kong's regional advantages and global industry policies to advance the development of a global supply chain centre for hydrogen energy equipment."

Jiangsu Guofu Hydrogen Energy Equipment Co Ltd, established in June 2016 with its headquarters in Zhangjiagang, Jiangsu Province, is a leading hydrogen energy storage and transportation equipment manufacturer and comprehensive industry chain solution provider in China. The company focuses on the research and development and manufacturing of core equipment for the entire hydrogen energy "production, storage, transportation, refuelling, and utilization" industry chain. Its product line covers water electrolysis hydrogen production equipment, vehicle hydrogen supply systems (including high-pressure/liquid hydrogen storage cylinders), complete hydrogen refuelling station equipment, liquid hydrogen storage and transportation containers, and hydrogen liquefaction plant solutions.

For more information about Guofu Hydrogen Energy, please visit www.guofuheee.com.



[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected counterfeit mobile phones and accessories worth about \\$4.25 million \(with photo\)](#)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs conducted an enforcement operation on May 13 and 15 to combat the sale of counterfeit goods in Kwun Tong and Sham Shui Po, and seized a total of about 3 300 suspected counterfeit mobile phones and accessories with a total estimated market value of about \$4.25 million. Nine persons were arrested.

Customs earlier received information alleging that suspected counterfeit mobile phones and accessories were on sale in shops. After detailed investigations and with the assistance of trademark owners, Customs officers on May 13 raided three wholesale companies located in the Kwun Tong Industrial Area and seized about 3 250 suspected counterfeit mobile phones and accessories with an estimated market value of about \$4.25 million. On May 15, Customs officers raided three retail shops in Sham Shui Po and further seized about 50 suspected counterfeit mobile phone accessories with an estimated market value of \$5,000.

During the operation, Customs arrested seven men and two women, aged between 23 and 46, including three directors, a shop owner and five salespersons. They have been released on bail pending further investigation. The likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out.

Customs will continue to step up inspections and enforcement to vigorously combat the sale of different kinds of counterfeit goods.

Customs reminds consumers to procure goods at reputable shops and to

check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt. Traders should also be cautious in merchandising since the sale of counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale any goods with a forged trademark commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected counterfeiting activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).