

Two women sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine orders

Two women were sentenced by the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today (July 14) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) and the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E) respectively.

The first case involved a woman aged 39, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, she left the place of quarantine on December 20, 2020, without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. She was charged with contravening Sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) and was sentenced by the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for 10 days.

The second case involved a woman aged 27, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at a hotel for 21 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, she left the place of quarantine on April 11, 2021, without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. She was charged with contravening Sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E) and was sentenced by the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today to imprisonment for 10 days, suspended for 12 months.

Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months. A spokesman for the Department of Health said the sentence sends a clear message to the community that breaching a compulsory quarantine order is a criminal offence that the Government will not tolerate, and solemnly reminded the public to comply with the regulations. As of today, a total of 156 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to 14 weeks or a fine of up to \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.

S for S speaks on officials breaching

group gathering regulation

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, at a media session after attending the meeting of the Legislative Council today (July 14):

Reporter: Besides the three Hong Kong officials, who are the other people at the dinner? Were there actually Mainland officials involved? Secondly, are you saying that when officials do not know about how extravagant the receptions or advantages they receive, that means that they can accept them? Are you saying that other civil servants can do that? Thank you.

Secretary for Security: It is because the case is under criminal investigation and it will be presented in court in due course, and because of privacy issues, I think I am not able to disclose the identity of other participants. Regarding the treatment, I think you have wrongly interpreted what I am saying. I am saying that as officials, we have to avoid or be alert to any lavish treatment. But for this case, there is no reasonable suspicion by the three officers that the meal is lavish. Of course if they know that it is lavish, I am sure they will have different treatment. For sure they won't do what they have done.

Reporter: When you said that officials sacrificed their time with their families to do that work dinner, so could you clarify that what were those key takeaways in that dinner especially when the attendance in that case involved in the criminal case?

Secretary for Security: First of all, what you refer about the criminal (case) is what happened after the dinner. On this thought, I don't think any officials will have any idea about someone sitting among the table will be committing an offence. As I said, as officials, we have to keep in contact with different sectors, of different natures. It is because when we are formulating our strategies and our work, we have to know what the society is thinking about. I think this is very treasurable, especially (to know) what the different sectors are thinking about.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Sport For All Day 2021 on August 1 features online and offline activities

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will organise the Sport For All Day 2021 on August 1 (Sunday). In addition to free recreation

and sports programmes, and opening of various leisure facilities for free use by the public, sports demonstrations will be webcast live to encourage people to engage in regular sports and physical activities, promoting the message "Stay Active, Healthy and Happy!"

To show support for Hong Kong athletes taking part in the Tokyo Olympics Games, Olympic sports-related play-in activities which include fencing, badminton, table-tennis, etc, will be held at designated sports centres in 18 districts on Sport For All Day 2021 for public participation to create an Olympic atmosphere in the community.

With dance as the focal sport of Sport For All Day this year, demonstrations of dance and other sports will be featured in a live webcast via the event website (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/sfad/2021) and the "LCSD Plusss" Facebook page (www.facebook.com/LCSDPlusss) on the event day from 2pm. Members of the public can experience the vigor of sports demonstrations at home through online platforms.

A series of free recreation and sports programmes will be held from 2pm to 6pm on August 1 at designated sports centres in 18 districts. Apart from Olympic sports-related activities, dance and other sports demonstrations, fun games, fitness corners, sports activities for parents and children, health talks and activities for persons with disabilities will also be organised. Activity coupons will be distributed from 8.30am on July 19 (Monday) at respective LCSD District Leisure Services Offices (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/sfad/2021/programme.html) and designated venues in the 18 districts.

Various LCSD leisure facilities will also be open for free use by the public on Sport For All Day 2021. Booking for these facilities can be made at Leisure Link booking counters (except self-service kiosks) starting from 9am on July 25 (Sunday). Each person may book one free session for one type of facility only.

Prior booking is not required for public swimming pools. Members of the public may line up at entrances of swimming pools before each session for free admission on a first-come, first-served basis.

Leisure facilities open for free use by the public on August 1 include:

- Indoor leisure facilities: badminton courts, tennis courts, basketball courts, netball courts, volleyball courts, squash courts, table tennis tables, American pool tables, billiard tables, sport climbing walls, bowling greens, golf facilities, fitness rooms, activity rooms, dance rooms and cycling tracks;
- Outdoor leisure facilities: tennis courts, tennis practice courts, bowling greens, batting cages, sport climbing walls, archery ranges, rope course and golf facilities (excluding camp facilities, sports grounds and artificial and natural turf pitches);
- Public swimming pools (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/swim-intro.html)

- (excluding Wan Chai Swimming Pool); and
- Craft at water sports centres

For details of the Sport For All Day 2021, please visit the website at www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/sfad.

Sport For All Day 2021 is co-organised and supported by the Department of Health; the Sports Medicine Team of the Chinese University of Hong Kong; the Sports Medicine and Health Science Alumni Association of the Chinese University of Hong Kong; the Physical Fitness Association of Hong Kong, China; the Hong Kong Paralympic Committee and Sports Association for the Physically Disabled; the Hong Kong DanceSport Association; and the CLP Holdings Limited.

CHP closely monitors human case of avian influenza A(H5N6) in Sichuan

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (July 14) closely monitoring a human case of avian influenza A(H5N6) in Sichuan Province, and again urged the public to maintain strict personal, food and environmental hygiene both locally and during travel.

The case involves a 55-year-old man living in Bazhong City in Sichuan Province. He developed symptoms on June 30 and was admitted to hospital for treatment on July 4. The patient is in critical condition. The patient had contact with live domestic poultry before the onset of symptoms.

From 2014 to date, 32 human cases of avian influenza A(H5N6) have been reported by the Mainland health authorities.

"All novel influenza A infections, including H5N6, are notifiable infectious diseases in Hong Kong," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Travellers to the Mainland or other affected areas must avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms. They should be alert to the presence of backyard poultry when visiting relatives and friends. They should also avoid purchasing live or freshly slaughtered poultry, and avoid touching poultry/birds or their droppings. They should strictly observe personal and hand hygiene when visiting any places with live poultry.

Travellers returning from affected areas should consult a doctor promptly if symptoms develop, and inform the doctor of their travel history for prompt diagnosis and treatment of potential diseases. It is essential to tell the doctor if they have seen any live poultry during travel, which may

imply possible exposure to contaminated environments. This will enable the doctor to assess the possibility of avian influenza and arrange necessary investigations and appropriate treatment in a timely manner.

While local surveillance, prevention and control measures are in place, the CHP will remain vigilant and work closely with the World Health Organization and relevant health authorities to monitor the latest developments.

The public should maintain strict personal, hand, food and environmental hygiene and take heed of the advice below when handling poultry:

- Avoid touching poultry, birds, animals or their droppings;
- When buying live chickens, do not touch them and their droppings. Do not blow at their bottoms. Wash eggs with detergent if soiled with faecal matter and cook and consume the eggs immediately. Always wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling chickens and eggs;
- Eggs should be cooked well until the white and yolk become firm. Do not eat raw eggs or dip cooked food into any sauce with raw eggs. Poultry should be cooked thoroughly. If there is pinkish juice running from the cooked poultry or the middle part of its bone is still red, the poultry should be cooked again until fully done;
- Wash hands frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, before handling food or eating, and after going to the toilet, touching public installations or equipment such as escalator handrails, elevator control panels or door knobs, or when hands are dirtied by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing; and
- Wear a mask if fever or respiratory symptoms develop, when going to a hospital or clinic, or while taking care of patients with fever or respiratory symptoms.

The public may visit the CHP's pages for more information: the [avian influenza](#) page, the weekly [Avian Influenza Report](#), [global statistics and affected areas](#) of avian influenza, the [Facebook Page](#) and the [YouTube Channel](#).

LCQ6: Government's support for emerging industries

Following is a question by the Hon Paul Tse and a reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, in the Legislative Council today (July 14):

Question:

The Government launched the Food Truck Pilot Scheme (Food Truck Scheme) some four years ago, which attracted a group of small business operators to invest money and time in operating food trucks. However, a number of food truck operators have relayed that due to the excessive restrictions imposed by the Government on the operation of food trucks and the lack of support for them, they have been struggling long and hard to keep their businesses afloat, and they may eventually close down their businesses to reduce loss. Some members of the public have relayed that the Government does not understand business operation, and has been wasting time and effort on causally promoting those emerging industries whose development is unsuitable for Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has reviewed the reasons for the failure of the Food Truck Scheme and learned a lesson; if it has reviewed, of the outcome; if not, whether it will conduct such a review expeditiously and assess whether, in the event that the Scheme comes to an undesirable ending, public confidence in the Government's formulation and implementation of policies for boosting the economy will be undermined;

(2) whether it will review the modes by which the Government supports emerging industries, as well as provide more concessions (such as tax relief and interest-free loans) for the relevant industries, cut bureaucratic procedures and remove red tape, so as to create a business-friendly environment; and

(3) as some members of the public have criticised that the research and development project on a nasal vaccine against the Coronavirus Disease 2019 led by the University of Hong Kong has received a funding of mere \$20 million from the Government, which is much less than the some \$50 million deployed for the construction of the music fountains at the Kwun Tong Promenade, and this situation reflects the Government's short-sightedness and inability to proactively grasp advantageous opportunities in respect of supporting scientific research industries, whether the Government will, by making reference to the practice of the Singapore Government, set up a sovereign wealth fund to proactively invest in scientific research projects in Hong Kong and abroad with potentials and plough the huge sum of profits yielded from successful projects back to the fund, so as to allow the fund to recycle capital for investment?

Reply:

President,

Part (1) of the question raised by Hon Paul Tse is under the purview of our Bureau. For parts (2) and (3), I have consulted the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Innovation and Technology Bureau and provide a reply as follows:

(1) The first part is about food trucks. In the Budget presented in 2015, the Government put forward its plan to consider introducing food trucks. It is hoped that the Food Truck Pilot Scheme (the Scheme) would become a tourism

promotion project implemented in the form of a pilot scheme.

The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) and the Tourism Commission of the CEDB within their policy framework, have all along provided support and assistance to food trucks as a tourism promotion project. However, food truck is also a commercially operated project. Each of the food truck operators participating in the Scheme should also have the requisite operating conditions to enable them to generate revenue and allow the Scheme to continue.

As a matter of fact, the CEDB has, since the commencement of the Scheme, provided a lot of support and refined the Scheme in response to the operational difficulties and challenges faced by food trucks and, as mentioned by the Hon Tse, relaxed limitations as far as possible in order to expand their business opportunities and flexibility. Such work includes:

- (a) Exploring new operating locations continuously for the operation of food trucks and introducing eight new operating locations in addition to the original eight designated locations;
- (b) Relaxing restrictions by offering a more flexible operation schedule so as to facilitate the operators to secure location and trading period with more business opportunities including allowing food trucks to operate in different venues at day time and night time; operators to bid for available vacant pitch either by drawing lot or on a first-come-first-served basis; and to swap trading period of the same venue with another operator;
- (c) Adopting suggestion of the operators to identify new operating venues;
- (d) Expanding the mode of operation by allowing food trucks to participate in self-identified events which are open to the public with appropriate licences obtained. Since the commencement of the Scheme, operators have applied for operation in 103 self-identified events and all were approved to proceed; and
- (e) Alleviating their burden by reducing the operating cost substantially and allowing operators to opt whether to operate at individual venue and pay rental fees for operation days only.

Besides the five measures mentioned above, in view of the impact of the riots and the epidemic on food truck operation, a series of helping measures implemented by the Government have also benefitted operators of food trucks, including waiving all license fees and first vehicle examination fees for food trucks; providing a one-off subsidy of \$80,000 to all operators; offering 75 per cent rental concession at government venues; and facilitating rental reduction for venues at the two theme parks respectively.

Apart from the policy support of the Government, we observe in our previous evaluation that the business performance of food trucks actually also hinges upon the business strategy of operators, for example, the food choices, food types, services and pricing and whether they can meet the preference and spending power of the patrons. Therefore, the business

performance of the 15 food trucks varied since their commencement of business. Up till now, three of them had suspended business. Twelve food trucks remain and among which five maintain relatively regular operation.

The Government has all along been pragmatic and supportive to food trucks and has been offering its support as far as possible. Though the Scheme encountered difficulties when it was first launched, and was affected by the riots in 2019 and the epidemic afterwards, the Government has been providing continuous support and assistance. Hence, the Government has extended the Scheme twice, until February 2, 2022. We are reviewing the data and the effectiveness of the Scheme to determine its way forward from the perspective of its sustainability, scalability and contribution to tourism, etc.

(2) Hong Kong has been practising a low and simple tax regime. The Government's policy is to strategically utilise our tax measures to enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness and to promote the development of our industries and economic diversification. The Government will consider the development needs of the local economy and industries, fiscal implications, and international tax standards, etc. in formulating tax measures.

In terms of support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the Government has been committed to helping enterprises resolve financing problems, and providing funding for enterprises to explore business opportunities. In April 2020, we launched the Special 100% Guarantee Product under the SME Financing Guarantee Scheme to provide low-interest loans for enterprises affected by the epidemic, with over \$62 billion of loans approved so far.

We have also strengthened financial support for SMEs, including increasing the funding ceiling and expanding the funding scope of the SME Export Marketing Fund and the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales by four times and 12 times respectively to allow SMEs to utilise Government funding to engage in market promotion and business expansion in the Mainland and overseas. Over 14 000 enterprises have received more than \$2.3 billion funding in the past four years.

(3) In the past four years, the Government has been making efforts to promote Hong Kong's innovation and technology (I&T) development along various areas. The Government has so far committed more than \$110 billion to further enhance Hong Kong's I&T ecosystem, of which encouraging investment and supporting technology start-ups have formed an integral part, with more than \$10 billion being devoted through the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) and other schemes. It is also announced in this year's Budget that the Government would inject \$9.5 billion in total to the ITF two years in a row.

With the smooth rolling out of various I&T policies, all these efforts have brought significant enhancements to the local I&T ecosystem. For example, the number of local startups increased from more than 1 000 in 2014 to more than 3 300 in 2020, with their number of employees increasing from more than 2 000 to more than 12 000. Investment from venture capital funds in

Hong Kong also increased drastically from \$1.2 billion in 2014 to about \$10 billion in 2020. We are happy to see that there are currently 11 unicorns in Hong Kong. In fact, Hong Kong enjoys tremendous strength in scientific research. Many start-ups have successfully commercialised their research and development outcomes while a few unicorns also benefitted from Hong Kong's I&T infrastructure, policy measures and funding schemes, etc.

The Government will continue to support the industry, academia and research institutes through different schemes under the ITF, covering upstream, midstream, downstream research and to help technology start-ups attract private investment. For example, the ITVF (the Innovation and Technology Venture Fund) under the ITF encourages venture capital funds to invest in local I&T start-ups and currently has nine co-investment partners. Since its inception in 2017 up to June this year, the ITVF has invested around \$120 million in 20 local I&T start-ups.

Furthermore, the tenants (and incubatees) of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and Cyberport attracted more than \$40 billion of investment from 2018-19 to 2020-21 to further support technology start-ups. The HKSTPC will also pump up its Corporate Venture Fund to \$600 million, and Cyberport will pump up a similar fund (the Cyberport Macro Fund) to \$400 million. The scopes of the two funds will be expanded to cover Series B and later stage investments.

Thank you, President.