

[CE to attend Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, will visit Hainan from April 18 to 21 to attend the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021. The theme of this year's conference is "A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation". The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, and the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, will join the visit.

Mrs Lam will depart for Hainan via Shenzhen in the evening of April 18. On April 20, she will attend the opening ceremony of the annual conference and will discuss with other guests at the sessions "Invigorate Development through Vibrant City Clusters: The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area as a Model" and the Women Roundtable. While in Hainan, she will also meet with the leaders of some ministries, provinces and cities.

Mrs Lam will return to Hong Kong via Shenzhen on April 21. During her absence, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, will be Acting Chief Executive, and the Executive Council will be in recess on April 20.

[Twenty-seven persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations \(with photos\)](#)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a series of territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations, including operations codenamed "Twilight" and "Rally" and joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion" and "Powerplayer", from April 12 to yesterday (April 15). A total of 17 suspected illegal workers and 10 suspected employers were arrested.

During operations "Twilight" and "Rally", ImmD Task Force officers raided 35 target locations including a commercial building, construction sites, factories, massage parlours, recycling depots, residential buildings, restaurants, retail shops, a salon and a warehouse. Ten suspected illegal workers and six employers were arrested. The suspected illegal workers comprised six men and four women, aged 22 to 57. Among them, three men and a woman were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. In addition, two men and three women were suspected of using and being in possession of forged Hong Kong identity cards and one woman was

suspected of using and being in possession of a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Meanwhile, five men and one woman, aged 31 to 58, were suspected of employing the illegal workers.

In addition, during operations "Champion" and "Powerplayer", enforcement officers raided 136 target locations in the Hong Kong International Airport cargo terminal, New Territories South and Western district including loading/unloading platforms, massage parlours, offices, a park and warehouses. Seven suspected illegal workers and four suspected employers were arrested. The suspected illegal workers comprised five men and two women, aged 31 to 56. Among them, four men were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. Meanwhile, one man and three women, aged 40 to 54, were suspected of employing the illegal workers.

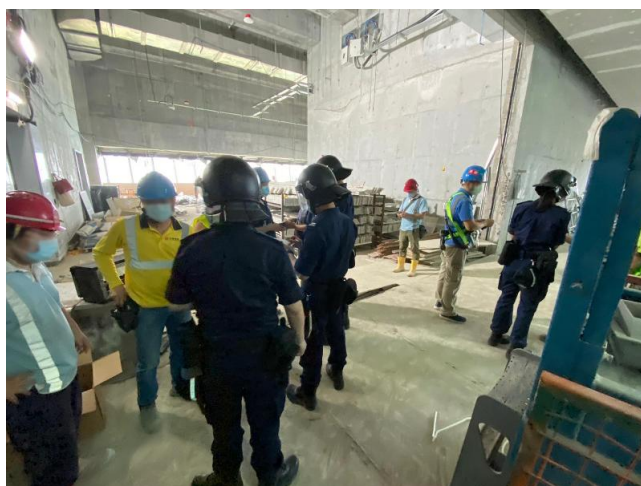
"Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction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

The spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases. 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 a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. 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. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure,

conduct 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 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, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.



Red tide sighted

A red tide was sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (April 16).

The red tide was spotted by staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department on April 13 at Pui O Beach, Lantau Island. The red tide persists and no associated fish deaths have been reported as at today.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The red tide was formed by *Takayama tuberculata*, which is not common in Hong Kong waters and is non-toxic."

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue monitoring red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.

Two illegal workers jailed

Two illegal workers comprising one Indian and one Pakistani were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (April 15).

During a joint operation conducted by the Immigration Department (ImmD) and the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Sahara" on December 2, 2020, enforcement officers raided a restaurant in Tsim Sha Tsui. One male Indian illegal worker and one male Pakistani illegal worker, aged 44 and 42, were arrested while working as kitchen workers. Upon identity checking, they produced recognisance forms issued by the ImmD for inspection, which prohibit them from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that they were non-refoulement claimants. An employer suspected of employing the illegal workers was also arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The two illegal workers were charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. After trial, they were each sentenced to 22 months and two weeks' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. 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. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening on 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 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, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

Instrumental Music Training Scheme **intermediate and advanced year-one** **courses start recruitment**

The Instrumental Music Training Scheme (IMTS), organised by the Music Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, is now recruiting intermediate year-one and advanced year-one trainees for 2021-22. The deadline for applications is May 16.

The IMTS provides training in a wide variety of string, wind and Chinese musical instruments including violin, viola, cello, double bass, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, trumpet, French horn, trombone, percussion, erhu, pipa, sheng, suona and yangqin. Courses on musicianship and music theory are also included.

One-hour group lessons, conducted in Cantonese, are held once a week at the Music Office's five music centres in Wan Chai, Kwun Tong, Mong Kok, Sha Tin and Tsuen Wan. Annual tuition fees of \$3,377 for intermediate level and \$4,312 for advanced level are payable in four instalments.

Online applications are available at www.lcsd.gov.hk/musicoffice. Course pamphlets and application forms are now available at all Music Office music centres. Applicants must have attained the required music qualifications. Qualified applicants will receive details of their submission of an audition video by June 2. The deadline for submission of an audition video will be June 20. Applicants will be notified of the results in early August and the training will commence in early September.

For enquiries, please call the Music Office's music centres at 2802 0657 (Wan Chai), 2796 2893 (Kwun Tong), 2399 2200 (Mong Kok), 2158 6462 (Sha Tin) and 2417 6429 (Tsuen Wan).

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, visitors to music centres

of the Music Office are required to scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" QR code or register their name, contact number and the date and time of the visit before being allowed to enter. They will also need to use hand sanitiser, wear their own masks and be subject to temperature checks.