

## Twenty-two persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations (with photo)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations codenamed "Twilight" from March 1 to yesterday (March 4). A total of 16 suspected illegal workers, five suspected employers and a suspected aider and abettor were arrested.

During the "Twilight" operations, ImmD Task Force officers raided 30 target locations including a beauty parlour, a car park, a commercial building, a garbage collection depot, premises under renovation, a recycling yard, a residential building, restaurants, stores and vegetable stalls. The suspected illegal workers comprised eight men and eight women, aged 28 to 55. Among them, four men and a woman were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. In addition, a man was suspected of using and being in possession of a forged Hong Kong identity card. Meanwhile, five men, aged 38 to 62, were suspected of employing the illegal workers. In addition, a woman, aged 53, suspected of aiding and abetting a person who breached her condition of stay in Hong Kong was arrested.

"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.



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## [Hong Kong resident employer jailed](#)

A Hong Kong resident employer was jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (March 4).

During operation "Twilight" conducted on October 15, 2019, enforcement officers raided a restaurant in Tuen Mun. Two illegal workers were arrested while working as dish-washing workers. The Hong Kong resident employer of the two illegal workers was also arrested.

The illegal workers were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts earlier. The Hong Kong resident employer was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with two counts of being an employer of a person who was not lawfully employable as she did not take all practicable steps to ascertain whether the applicants were lawfully employable prior to employment. After trial, she was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for each count with parts of the sentences to run consecutively, making a total of four months' imprisonment.

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## [Tsuen Wan Public Library closed for disinfection today](#)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (March 5) said that Tsuen Wan Public Library (TWPL) learnt that a patient who preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19 had earlier visited the library. TWPL will be temporarily closed today for thorough cleaning and disinfection.

The patient visited TWPL on February 28 and preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19 infection yesterday (March 4).

In view of the current epidemic situation, enhanced measures including cleaning and disinfection have been conducted in the public libraries. Visitors to the public libraries will need to use hand sanitiser and will be

subject to temperature checks before admission. They also need to wear their own masks. The LCSD is highly concerned about the COVID-19 epidemic and will continue to maintain close liaison with the Centre for Health Protection. Staff are reminded to pay attention to personal hygiene and to stay vigilant. They should seek medical advice immediately if feeling unwell.

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## **Missing girl in Wong Tai Sin located**

A girl who went missing in Wong Tai Sin has been located.

Tong Xiangyin, aged 14, went missing after she left her residence on Tsz Wan Shan Road in the small hours on December 17, 2020. Her family made a report to Police on the same day.

The girl returned to her residence on Tsz Wan Shan Road yesterday (March 4) morning. She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

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## **CHP investigates 11 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, March 5, the CHP was investigating 11 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 11 067 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 11 066 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, three are imported cases, four are local cases with unknown sources while the remaining four cases are epidemiologically linked with local cases.

The first case with unknown sources involves a 47-year-old man (case number: 11061) who developed fever on March 1. His sample collected on March 3 was tested positive. He is a clerical staff. He last went to work on March 3.

The second case with unknown sources involves a 18-year-old man (case number: 11063) who developed headache and fever on February 22. His sample collected on March 1 was tested positive. He is a student and did not return to school to attend face-to-face classes.

The third case with unknown sources involves a 48-year-old man (case number: 11064) who developed fever on March 1. His sample collected on March 1 was tested positive. He is a clerical staff. He last went to work on February 26.

The fourth case with unknown sources involves a 37-year-old woman (case number: 11065) who developed headache on February 28. Her sample collected on March 2 was tested positive. She is a part time foreign domestic helper and she last went to work on February 23.

A total of 235 cases have been recorded in the past 14 days (February 19 to March 4), including 197 local cases of which 66 are from unknown sources.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)).

Meanwhile, the CHP reminded those who had visited specified venues under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the compulsory testing notice. The public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop.

The CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

The spokesman said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use.

After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link [wa.me/85296171823?text=hi](https://wa.me/85296171823?text=hi), they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.