

Three persons sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine orders

Three persons were sentenced by magistrates' courts today (October 22) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap 599C) or the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap 599E).

The first case involved a woman aged 48, 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 July 12 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 man aged 20. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he left the place of quarantine several times on March 23 without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. He was charged with three counts of 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 Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts today to eight weeks' imprisonment for each of the three charges, suspended for 24 months.

The third case involved a woman aged 37. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, she left the place of quarantine without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer and was stopped by an Immigration Officer at Hong Kong International Airport on September 28. She was also found to have removed her wristband. She was charged with three counts of contravening sections 8(1), 8(4) and 8(5) of the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap 599E). She was sentenced by the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for four weeks for each of the three charges, which are to run concurrently.

Pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap 599C) starting from February 8, save for exempted persons, all persons who have stayed in the Mainland, Macao or Taiwan in the 14 days preceding arrival in Hong Kong, regardless of their nationality or travel documents, will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. Moreover, pursuant to the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap 599E), starting from March 19, all persons arriving from countries or territories outside China would also be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. 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 compulsory quarantine regulations. As of today, a total of 59 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to three months or a fine of \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.