

Two persons sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

Two persons were sentenced to immediate imprisonment for up to four weeks by magistrates' courts today (September 15) 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).

The first case involved a woman aged 24, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at a hotel for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, she was found to have left the place of quarantine on April 16 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 Eastern Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for four weeks.

The second case involved a man aged 39, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he was found to have left the place of quarantine on March 19 and 20 without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. He was charged with two 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 Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for 21 days for each of the two 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 Regulation. As of today, a total of 43 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.

