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Chinese national detained at BIC for overstaying his visa

A Chinese national who overstay his visa and work permit but continue to reside unlawfully and work in a retail outlet in Kimbe, West New Britain province was identified by Immigration officers during a weeklong spot check operations in the province and was airlifted to Port Moresby and detained at the Bomana Immigration Centre (BIC).

The Chinese man married to a local woman overstayed his work and entry permits by three (3) years.

He was caught working as a retail manager in a shopping centre in Kimbe town and was escorted by Immigration and Police officers to Port Moresby and detained at BIC yesterday.

Chief Migration Officer Mr. Stanis Hulahau cautioned foreign nationals not to rely on their PNG spouse with the hope that the marriage to local woman would guarantee access to reside and work in the country.

“Your marriage with a local woman does not give you the right to reside, work or operate businesses without lawful entry permit. You must operate under the conditions provided in your visa and work permits,” Mr Hulahau stress.

The Chinese national will be subject to further investigations before a decision is made for his removal from the country.

The spot check operations targeting retail, wholesale and logging companies were conducted in Kimbe, Bialla town and at logging camps in Ulamona and Mekar.

Almost 40 foreign nationals operating businesses and working in those areas were penalized for various minor breaches of their visa conditions. The spot check team collected over K150,000 in fines and penalties.

“The spot fines and penalties imposed for the breach of visa conditions are prescribed under the Migration Laws and we apply them when the breaches are minor or not serious that does not requires removal,” Mr Hulahau explains. “However, we may arrest, detain and remove or deport non-compliant foreign nationals if they overstay their visa or conduct themselves in a manner that is criminal or serious under PNG laws.”

Mr Hulahau says West New Britain is a significant contributor in terms of tax and levies from commercial and logging activities and there is still need to ensure compliance in all the sectors.

Apart from the usual visa checks, the Spot Check team sighted non-compliance of other PNG laws in the two logging sites operated by Vanimo Jaya in Ulamona and Mekar in Biella. The team reported unregistered fleets including heavy duty machineries and trucks that transports logs and passengers.

Mr Hulahu says there are allegations of mistreatment and low salary rates reported by local workers at the two logging sites and he is urging respective government authorities to step up their efforts to make sure companies are compliant with the domestic laws.

“My officers who goes out to carry out checks cannot charge or penalize non-compliant companies for breaches outside of the Migration Laws so I’m urging other State Departments/Authorities to step up their efforts in protecting our local businesses and workforce,” says the CMO.

The Immigration led Spot Check operations in Kimbe was carried out with the support from PNG Customs and Police.





APPROVED FOR RELEASE

MR. STANIS HULAHU
Chief Migration Officer