

CHP investigates additional confirmed case of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has announced that as of 4pm today (May 27), the CHP was investigating an additional confirmed case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 1 067 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 1 066 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported case announced today involves a 24-year-old male who had a travel history during the incubation period. The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed case are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex.

The CHP again urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives to minimise the risk of infection. In particular, they should go out less and avoid social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings to reduce the chance of contacting infected persons who may not present any symptoms, and minimise the risk of outbreak clusters emerging in the community.

A spokesman for the CHP 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) 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, they will be

able to get information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, 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.

LCQ4: Land for petrol filling stations

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Han-pan and a reply by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam Sing, in the Legislative Council today (May 27):

Question:

A report in 2010 pointed out that the land costs of petrol filling station (PFS) sites in Hong Kong were double of those in Tokyo and nearly six times of those in London. Last year, a PFS site was granted at a land premium of \$620 million which, when amortised over a 21-year lease term, amounted to as high as \$80,000 per day or \$316 per square foot per month. There are comments that high land cost is the main cause for the persistently high

retail prices of auto-fuels (pump prices), and with Hong Kong's economy having been hard hit by the epidemic in recent months, reduction in pump prices can reduce the operating costs for commercial vehicles and the commuting costs of members of the public. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council¹⁴?

(1) of the criteria adopted by the authorities for determining the locations and the lease terms of PFSs; whether they have considered making available more PFS sites and shortening the lease terms so as to maintain flexibility in land uses and enhance competition in the fuel market; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) given that since April 2018, the Government has published the tender amounts of unsuccessful tender submissions on an anonymous basis after the completion of the transaction procedures in relation to the successful bid under the Land Sale Programme, whether such arrangement is applicable to PFS sites put up for sale by tender; if not, of the reasons for that; and

(3) given that in early years, the Government granted sites at nil land premium for setting up 12 dedicated auto-liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) filling stations, with a cap placed on LPG retail prices at such filling stations which is set according to a prescribed pricing formula, whether the authorities will consider adopting such approach in granting PFS sites, with a view to reducing pump prices; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President, the Environment Bureau (ENB)'s consolidated reply to the three parts of the question is as follows:

In considering whether it is necessary to reserve land for petrol filling station (PFS) in area development, the Government will make reference to the relevant pointers in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, as well as the development plan and traffic volume of that area. In selecting specific locations as PFS sites, factors such as land use compatibility, traffic, environmental and fire safety, etc. have to be taken into account.

As for the lease term of PFS sites, according to the decision of the Executive Council on July 15, 1997 on land leases and related matters, currently the lease term of land approved for sale by the Government for PFS use is 21 years.

The Competition Commission (the Commission) published a Report on Study into Hong Kong's Auto-fuel Market in May 2017, which sets out recommendations to enhance competition in Hong Kong's auto-fuel market, including putting up more PFS sites. Given that the existing PFSs can meet the current market demand for auto-fuel, and also in view of the land shortage in Hong Kong and the Government's policy to encourage the public to use public transport more and reduce reliance on private cars, we do not see a strong case for providing more land for PFS use at this stage.

Notwithstanding the above, in the light of the Commission's view that there are at present difficulties in converting privately-held land to PFS use, we have introduced facilitative measures to help the private sector convert privately-held land to PFS use, with a view to enhancing competition. In this connection, if the ENB receives a proposal to convert privately-held land to PFS use, we will provide one-stop service, which includes co-ordinating communications between the applicant and the relevant government departments, as well as the provision of technical advice by government departments to the applicant, during the process of planning permission/amendment of plan application (if applicable) and related land procedures. We believe that such an arrangement can save applicants' time in liaising with individual government departments, and help them respond to the views of the relevant departments more effectively.

In addition, where appropriate, the ENB plans to split some of the larger PFS sites into smaller ones, so as to increase the number of PFSs and promote competition. We are studying with relevant departments the feasibility of several PFS sites with potential for splitting, from the perspectives of traffic, fire safety, gas safety and the number of PFS in the vicinity, etc.

In terms of tendering arrangements, PFS sites are largely the same as government land in general. Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) filling stations adopt a different approach because it is necessary to achieve the policy objective of converting diesel taxis and public light buses to auto-LPG ones as soon as possible in order to improve air quality. Therefore, a pricing formula and "zero-land-premium" are adopted to quickly set up an LPG filling network with a reasonable coverage, and to keep the price of auto-LPG at a competitive level. This special policy background and consideration does not apply to PFSs.

Hong Kong is small and densely populated. In urban areas where development is concentrated, roads are narrow and traffic is particularly heavy. The Government's policy is to encourage the public to use public transport more and reduce reliance on private cars. Although the Government does not use land premium for PFSs as a measure to control the growth of vehicles, if the price of auto-fuel products is substantially reduced owing to lower than market value or even zero land premium for PFSs at the expense of government revenue, this is in fact using taxpayers' money to subsidise private vehicle owners, and may also indirectly encourage more people to own vehicles and motorists to make more unnecessary trips. This may worsen the traffic congestion problem and undermine the effectiveness of measures to improve roadside air quality. Hence, any proposal to change the existing tendering arrangements must be carefully considered from various policy perspectives such as environment, traffic, tax, land use, etc.

As for publishing the tender amounts of unsuccessful bidders on an anonymous basis after completion of the transaction procedures in relation to successful bid for land sale sites, it is currently applicable only to public tenders for residential, commercial and industrial sites.

President, Hong Kong being a free market economy, the retail prices of

auto-fuels have all along been determined by the market itself. The role of the Government is to make its best effort to ensure a stable fuel supply, enhance the transparency of the prices of fuel products, and remove barriers to market entry, thereby promoting competition. We appreciate that the public is concerned about the auto-fuel market, and thank Hon Chan Han-pan for his suggestions. The ENB will study with relevant policy bureaux and departments to see if there is a need to further adjust existing policy measures.

Thank you, President.

LCQ17: Handling of arrested persons by Police

Following is a question by Dr Hon Kwok Ka-ki and a written reply by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, in the Legislative Council today (May 27):

Question:

It has been reported that on the 7th of this month, a drunken man suspected of having criminally damaged vehicles put up resistance while being arrested. As such, he was pinned down by police officers who knelt on his neck, back and hands, and beat him with batons. After being subdued, that man was sent to the hospital for treatment and died on the following day. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the reasons why the Police, before conducting any investigation into the aforesaid incident, claimed in reply to media enquiries on that night that the force used by the police officers was "appropriate force";

(2) whether the Police have embarked on internal and criminal investigations into the incident; if so, whether the investigations have been completed; if so, of the outcome, including whether any police officer has been punished (e.g. interdiction) or transferred; if so, of the ranks and number of the police officers involved, as well as the details of the punishments; if no police officer has been punished, of the reasons for that;

(3) given that the Hong Kong Police Force Procedures Manual sets out the options of force to be used corresponding to six levels of resistance, of the level of resistance to which the force used by the police officers in the aforesaid incident corresponds;

(4) given that the Police guidelines on the use of force stipulate that police officers may use minimum force as appropriate only when (i) such an action is absolutely necessary and (ii) there are no other means to accomplish the lawful duty, whether the Police have assessed if the use of

force by the police officers in the aforesaid incident complied with such principles;

(5) given that in 2012, as a taxi driver became agitated and kept struggling when being arrested, he was dragged into a police car by a police officer by means of a chokehold, who thus suffered from a cervical vertebra dislocation and died after one month, and a Coroner's Court handed down a judgement in 2018 that the driver had been "unlawfully killed", whether the Police have, in the light of that incident, (i) improved the relevant codes and guidelines governing police officers' handling of persons who have lost their self-control ability (e.g. that police officers should refrain or be forbidden from pressing the vital parts of the body (such as the neck) of the persons they intend to arrest), and (ii) provided relevant training to police officers, so as to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents; and

(6) whether there are relevant provisions and codes in the existing Police Force Ordinance (Cap 232) and the Police General Orders that (i) instruct police officers on how to handle persons who have lost their self-control ability under the influence of alcohol, and (ii) prohibit police officers from using force in the form of a chokehold (including air choke and blood choke) on any person in the course of making an arrest; if so, of the details?

Reply:

President,

According to section 10 of the Police Force Ordinance (Cap 232), the Police have the responsibility to adopt lawful measures to maintain public safety, public order, as well as safeguard people's life and property. The Police will, in light of the circumstances at the scene, make assessments and exercise professional judgment to take appropriate actions, including using the minimum force as necessary, to ensure public safety and public order.

My reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

(1) to (4) In the afternoon of May 7, uniformed officers of Yau Tsim Police District were being asked for help by pedestrian(s) about an alleged criminal damage by a non-ethnic Chinese male when patrolling along the Nathan Road. The man was later stopped and searched by police officers. During the process, the man resisted and struggled violently, and attacked the police officers. Finally, the police officers, with the help of pedestrians, brought him under control by using appropriate force and carried him to the police car for further search and investigation. The man was arrested on suspected criminal damage, possession of drugs and attack on police officers. As the man was feeling unwell, the police officers called an ambulance and had him sent to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for treatment. The man was certified dead on May 8.

The case is being investigated by the Regional Crime Unit of Kowloon West. The Police have arranged for a Forensic Pathologist to perform an autopsy on the deceased. Initially, neither fractures nor damages to the

internal organs of the deceased were found. The cause of death is subject to further toxicological testing and investigation. The Police will submit the investigation report to the coroner for handling and scrutiny after completing the investigation. The report will include the cause of the deceased's death and the circumstances of the police officers' use of force.

In order not to prejudice the investigation and judicial proceedings in future, it is inappropriate for us to comment on the details of the case.

(5) The jury of a death inquest in 2018 recommended that police officers be trained on the techniques of carrying arrested persons to police cars.

Currently, every newly recruited or serving police officer must undergo rigorous training on the use of force, including how to handle suspects resisting arrest as well as the basic techniques and methods for carrying arrested persons under general circumstances.

(6) The Police have established guidelines on the use of force, including the response to different levels of resistance. Force is used by the Police in response to the prevailing circumstances at the scene, and how it is used depends on the resistance perceived by police officers based on the threat and circumstances at the time.

It is not appropriate to disclose the concrete details of the use of force in order to avoid affecting the effectiveness of the Police's enforcement. However, police officers must comply with the use of force principles when using force, i.e. they may use minimum force as appropriate only when such an action is absolutely necessary and there are no other means to accomplish the lawful duty. Police officers will give verbal warning prior to the use of force as far as circumstances permit, while the person(s) involved will be given every opportunity, where practicable, to obey police orders before force is used.

Every newly recruited or serving police officer has to go through rigorous training on the use of force in order to fully understand how to use different levels of force in a safe and effective manner as a means to achieve the relevant lawful purposes. Police officers will exercise a high level of restraint at all times and cease to use force once the purpose is achieved.

Protestors obstruct traffic in Central by blocking roads with rubbish bins and miscellaneous objects

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

At around 1pm today (May 27), a crowd of protestors occupied carriageways in the vicinity of Pedder Street, Central. Some protestors blocked roads with rubbish bins, traffic cones and large objects, paralysing the traffic. Both pedestrians and motorists were put in immense danger as they were forced to weave in and out between the obstacles on the roads. During Police's action, some protestors continued to throw miscellaneous objects onto the roads, showing a blatant disregard for road safety.

Police are now taking enforcement action and diverting traffic to prevent traffic accidents. Police will restore road safety and order as soon as possible.

Phishing email related to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited on phishing email, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the email concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the email should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.