

Chief Executive thanks Central Government for ceaseless support for Hong Kong to fight epidemic (with photos/video)

â€‹The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (February 19) expressed her gratitude to the Central Government for its ceaseless support for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to fight the epidemic at the commencement ceremony of the construction of community isolation and treatment facilities at Penny's Bay. She was also most encouraged by the unity and enthusiasm among different sectors of the community in the current fight against the virus.

Addressing the commencement ceremony of the construction of community isolation and treatment facilities this afternoon, Mrs Lam said that the Central Government, in response to the request of the HKSAR Government, had commissioned a Mainland construction team to build some 10 000 community isolation and treatment units at Penny's Bay and Kai Tak within a very short period of time. This would significantly enhance the HKSAR's anti-epidemic capacity.

Mrs Lam said that the HKSAR Government would also spare no efforts in increasing community isolation and treatment facilities by all means, including the requisition of newly completed public housing estates, rental of commercial hotels and conversion of indoor sport centres. Some 20 000 extra units were estimated to be made available for people who tested positive for COVID-19 but had no or mild symptoms for isolation. With the efforts by the anti-epidemic task force of the Security Bureau, three Community Isolation Facility Hotels, namely Dorsett Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong, iclub Ma Tau Wai Hotel, and iclub Fortress Hill Hotel, had started taking in confirmed patients.

In addition, the HKSAR Government has decided to turn the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal into a community isolation and treatment facility providing about 1 000 beds. Upon the on-site inspection by the relevant departments yesterday (February 18), works will commence at full speed.

Following the arrival of four Mainland epidemiological experts, a number of testing technicians and two mobile testing vehicles two days ago, four experts in critical care medicine and 110 nucleic acid testing personnel were sent by the Central Government today to Hong Kong to participate in the anti-epidemic work. The four experts in critical care medicine will share with the health officials of Hong Kong and experts of the Hospital Authority their experience in treating COVID-19 patients tomorrow (February 20) in order to gain a good understanding of how patients, especially those with severe symptoms, are diagnosed, treated and taken care of in Hong Kong. The Mainland specimen collection team will participate in a liaison meeting on work

techniques, after which they will immediately commence specimen collection and testing work.

Mrs Lam was pleased to learn that businesses, be they local enterprises or Mainland enterprises stationing in Hong Kong, had also rendered their full support to the anti-epidemic work in response to appeals, including allocating hotels for turning into isolation facilities, setting up vaccination stations at some malls or offices, providing land or venues for the construction of isolation and treatment facilities, ensuring the supply of anti-epidemic provisions and daily necessities to Hong Kong, and donating rapid test kits and anti-epidemic supplies to the grassroots.

Mrs Lam said, "While expressing my gratitude to the enterprises, I hope that property developers and landlords can also offer rent concession to their commercial tenants, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, to foster solidarity. Coupled with the fifth and sixth rounds of the Anti-epidemic Fund rolled out by the HKSAR Government, the support will tide the affected enterprises over the difficult times.

"Hong Kong is facing an unprecedented and new wave of the epidemic. We are under a critical situation amid this smokeless battle. We are sincerely grateful to the Central Government for its assistance which is stronger and speedier than ever. I shall lead the HKSAR Government to assume the main responsibility to fight the epidemic in order for the people of Hong Kong to resume their normal lives early."



