

CS celebrates Lunar New Year with community and wishes Hong Kong prosperous and spirited Year of Dragon (with photos)

As the Year of the Dragon unfolds, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, today (February 10), on the first day of the Lunar New Year, attended the blessing lantern lighting ceremony of the Hong Kong Well-wishing Festival 2024 to extend his New Year greetings to citizens of Hong Kong. He also paid a visit to the Shenzhen Bay Control Point to learn about its preparation and operations during the Lunar New Year holidays and express his heartfelt gratitude to colleagues who dedicatedly performed their duties.

Mr Chan attended the blessing lantern lighting ceremony of the Hong Kong Well-wishing Festival 2024 in Lam Tsuen, Tai Po, this morning, joining citizens in wishing Hong Kong a prosperous New Year. Speaking at the ceremony, Mr Chan said that this year is the Year of the Dragon, with the dragon symbolising wisdom and strength. He eagerly looks forward to the Government, jointly with all sectors of society, gathering wisdom, exerting strength, and leading Hong Kong to soar and thrive in the new journey of advancement from stability to prosperity.

He added that the Government will continue to be wholehearted in its governance in the New Year. He wished for the collaboration of the Government, the business sector and the community in achieving four hopes, namely safeguarding national security with resolute determination, drawing diverse talent with full confidence, supporting grassroots communities with joint efforts, and enhancing district governance with people's needs taken to heart.

This is the first Lunar New Year holiday after the resumption of normality in Hong Kong, with the Shenzhen Bay Control Point and the Lo Wu Control Point extending their service hours on specified dates of the holidays for the first time to divert cross-boundary passenger and vehicular movements more effectively. Accompanied by the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, and the Director of Immigration, Mr Benson Kwok, Mr Chan also visited the Shenzhen Bay Control Point this morning to inspect its operations and meet frontline staff of the Customs and Excise Department, the Immigration Department and the Hong Kong Police Force who were on duty. He learnt about the arrangements for customs clearance, public order maintenance, etc, at the control point during the Lunar New Year period. Along the way, he took the opportunity to extend his New Year greetings to the citizens and travellers he met.

Mr Chan was pleased to note that the relevant government departments have been in close liaison with one another, as well as with stakeholders of

transport, tourism and other sectors, for proper preparation and co-ordination. The various control points in Hong Kong, including the two aforesaid ones, have been generally operating in an orderly and smooth manner. He expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the colleagues at the control points, as well as to all other staff of the Government and practitioners from various sectors who work steadfastly during the Lunar New Year holidays.

Mr Chan instructed all relevant departments to press ahead with the full implementation of the special boundary-crossing and relevant transport arrangements for the Lunar New Year holidays. The departments will continue to deploy manpower appropriately to ensure sufficient clearance counters and channels available at various control points for effective diversion of passenger and vehicular traffic. They will also continue to liaise closely with their Mainland counterparts. The aim is to maintain orderly customs clearance for the public and travellers. The Transport Department will continuously monitor the traffic situation in various districts, especially at control points and major stations, and maintain close communication with the MTR Corporation Limited and operators of other public transport such as franchised buses and cross-boundary coaches. It will take timely measures as the situation so warrants.

At the same time, Mr Chan appealed to travellers visiting Hong Kong during the Lunar New Year to plan their trips in advance to avoid departure via land boundary control points in the small hours or peak hours. He encouraged them to stay overnight in Hong Kong to have a more diverse and enriching travel experience. He instructed relevant departments, in collaboration with public transport operators, to continue to disseminate in a timely manner the latest information on the traffic conditions at the control points and major stations through television, radio and online platforms, so that citizens and travellers intending to enter or leave Hong Kong can make appropriate transportation arrangements.

The day before yesterday (February 8), Mr Chan joined the year-end caring visit in 18 districts co-ordinated by the Home Affairs Department in the Central and Western District. He visited ethnic-minority families and distributed gifts on behalf of the Government to share with them the festive joy. He also participated in the Day x Night Vibes @ 18 Districts "Yau Tsim Mong Presents – The Year Of The Dragon: Countdown Celebration" event at Yau Ma Tei Community Centre Rest Garden yesterday (February 9) to ring in the joyous Year of the Dragon with members of the public.



