

Government extends place-specific flight suspension mechanism

The Government announced today (February 23) that the place-specific flight suspension mechanism for Australia, Canada, France, India, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the United Kingdom and the United States of America will be extended to April 20.

The Government earlier invoked the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to implement the place-specific flight suspension mechanism for Australia, Canada, France, India, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The relevant measure was to be maintained until March 4. Noting that the local epidemic situation remains severe, and there has all along been many Hong Kong residents returning from these nine places, in order to prevent imported cases from posing additional pressure on the healthcare system at this crucial juncture of curbing the local epidemic situation, the Government will extend the place-specific flight suspension mechanism. From March 5 to April 20, all passenger flights from these nine places will be prohibited from landing in Hong Kong, and at the same time, persons who have stayed in these places for more than two hours within 14 days will be restricted from boarding passenger flights for Hong Kong, so as to stop persons from the relevant places from travelling to Hong Kong via transit.

At the same time, the flight-specific suspension mechanism as triggered by the detection of imported cases will continue its operation.

The Government will continue to reference relevant data and assess whether the places covered under the place-specific flight suspension mechanism should be adjusted. The Government will also review in due course whether the place-specific flight suspension mechanism should be lifted or continued by taking into account the latest global and local epidemic developments.

A Government spokesman said, "We understand that the place-specific flight suspension mechanism is an extremely stringent emergency measure, and will inevitably affect the return journeys of Hong Kong residents from these nine places. However, we must maintain the relevant measure so as to quickly quell the epidemic situation, in order to prevent imported cases from posing additional pressure on the medical system."