

## SCMA visits ethnic minorities in Yau Tsim Mong district (with photos)

The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, visited ethnic minorities (EM) in Yau Tsim Mong District today (January 17). He met with representatives of the EM community in the district and visited an EM activity centre and a restaurant run by EMs to exchange views with them on district and community issues. He also briefed them on the Government's enhanced preventive measures in response to the cluster of pneumonia cases detected in Wuhan.

Accompanied by the District Officer (Yau Tsim Mong), Mrs Laura Aron, Mr Nip met some representatives of the EM community in the district to exchange views on matters relating to support to EMs as well as district and community issues. He learnt that there were about 53 000 EMs living in the district, topping all districts in terms of number. A Working Group on Ethnic Affairs was set up some years ago in the district and various activities, such as career talks and exhibitions, as well as language courses have been held to encourage and promote their integration in society.

He said, "Hong Kong is a diverse and inclusive society. The Government is committed to eliminating racial discrimination and promoting equal opportunities for EMs. Since the establishment of the Steering Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs in mid-2018, an array of strengthening measures for EMs have been rolled out, covering areas such as education, employment, social welfare and social integration."

"To further enhance our work, the Government has included in the 2018 Policy Address a proposal on improving the Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality (the Guidelines) for application to all government bureaux and departments as well as related organisations providing services for EMs. We will consult the Panel on Constitutional Affairs of the Legislative Council in February on the key features of the improved Guidelines, such as provision of interpretation services and collection of race-related data from service users."

Mr Nip said that the Government had all along been committed to building a caring and inclusive society. In response to the needs of the grass-roots and the underprivileged people, including the elderly, grass-roots workers, low-income households, etc, the Chief Executive announced a package of 10 new livelihood initiatives a few days ago, such as standardising and increasing the monthly payment rate of the Old Age Living Allowance to \$3,585 and lowering the eligible age of the \$2 transport fare concession scheme to 60, with a view to providing them with better protection and alleviating their livelihood pressure.

In the light of the community's concerns about the cluster of pneumonia cases recently detected in Wuhan, Mr Nip briefed the EMs on Government's surveillance and preventive measures and the latest development of the

matter. He said that a dedicated webpage ([www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html](http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html)) had been set up by the Centre for Health Protection to provide relevant information and health advice. EMs can also make use of interpretation services provided by the CHEER Centre to better understand the relevant health information.

Mr Nip then visited an activity centre for EMs and a restaurant run by EMs in the district. He chatted with them to learn about their daily life, their needs as well as problems encountered. Appealing to them to maintain strict personal, food and environmental hygiene, he handed them some promotional leaflets and cleansing packs. He also brought them Chinese New Year gifts and send them his greetings.

Mr Nip said that the Government would continue to provide appropriate support services for EMs to enhance equal opportunities for them and facilitate their integration into society.

