

HAD distributes complimentary COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff in Kwai Tsing, Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan Districts

â€œIn light of positive test results for the COVID-19 virus from sewage samples collected in Kwai Tsing, Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan Districts, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) said today (December 20) that the Kwai Tsing District Office (K&TDO), the Kwun Tong District Office (KTDO) and the Tsuen Wan District Office (TWDO) have distributed a total of about 71 000 COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in the Districts.

The K&TDO commenced distributing rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in residential premises around Shek Yam Road for voluntary testing through the property management companies and the owners' corporations.

The KTDO also distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in residential premises around Yuet Wah Street for voluntary testing through the property management companies and the owners' corporations.

In addition, the TWDO distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Primrose Hill and The Rise for voluntary testing through the property management companies. The TWDO also distributed rapid test kits to residents living in Yau Ma Hom Resite Village and Chung Kwai Chung Tsuen for voluntary testing through the Village Representatives.

The HAD made the above arrangements in the hope of identifying infected persons early.

Members of the public may refer to the demonstration video produced by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) under the Department of Health (DH) via www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzFAUzTtmKk to learn how to use the rapid antigen test (RAT) kit.

Persons testing positive through an RAT should take a photo of the test result and declare the result within 24 hours via the Declaration System for Individuals Tested Positive for COVID-19 Using Rapid Antigen Test (www.chp.gov.hk/ratp). If members of the public encounter difficulties in using the online platform, they can call the automated system at 183 6119 to register their identification document and telephone number. The CHP under the DH will contact the relevant person later to complete the report

procedure. There is no need to declare negative test results.

The Government appeals for the co-operation of members of the public to safeguard the health of themselves and their families by undergoing testing on a voluntary basis and fighting the virus together. The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases that tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons to reduce the transmission risks of COVID-19.

Appeal for blood donations as stocks run low

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for the Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) today (December 20) announced that blood inventories have been depleted to a very low level, with only about three days' stock remaining. As blood collection continues to drop amid the sustaining cold weather, daily blood collection remains unstable and has been unable to meet the daily target. With the increasing daily demand for blood from public hospitals during the winter surge, the BTS appeals to the public to come forward to donate blood as soon as possible to replenish the blood inventories, in order to sustain necessary blood transfusions for patients in need and to give patients the blessing of reunion amid the festive seasons.

Most BTS donor centres will maintain service during the Christmas and New Year holidays (Annex 1). Members of the public are strongly advised to donate blood before travelling abroad to share their holiday blessings with patients. As a token of gratitude, the BTS has prepared a "Christmas edition folding cup" for blood donors who come forward to give blood during December 20 to 30 at donor centres or donation vehicles (Annex 2).

The BTS invites the public to come forward and give blood now for a timely replenishment of inventories for patients in need. The public is advised to make an appointment by contacting BTS donor centres via the Donor Web Portal (blooddonor.ha.org.hk) or the "HK Blood" mobile app.

Moreover, BTS announced that the blood donor screening policy on variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (commonly known as mad cow disease) will be lifted tomorrow (December 21). Members of the public who had stayed three or more months cumulatively in the United Kingdom between 1980 and 1996; and who had stayed five or more years cumulatively in France or Ireland between 1980 and 2001, will be accepted to donate blood. In other words, members of the public

who had previously resided in the abovementioned countries will all be accepted to donate blood in future. BTS appealed to those who were suspended from donating blood due to the policy concerned in the past to come forward during the blood donation drives to save lives. Members of the public can call the BTS donor centres or 2710 1333 during office hours with enquiries on the updates when planning a blood donation.

The policy was implemented by BTS in late 1999, and has been reviewed and updated in a timely manner over the years. With reference to international trends and guidelines, as well as related medical literature and data on variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease in Hong Kong, the Hospital Authority (Blood Transfusion Service) Expert Panel on Blood and Blood Products Safety has approved to update the policy earlier.

[Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo \(with video\)](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session before the Executive Council (ExCo) meeting today (December 20):

Reporter: Good morning, Chief Executive. First, what's your expectation of your duty visit to Beijing, how would you bargain for border reopening with Mainland China, and what would be the main directions? Second, what follow-up actions would the Government take against Google on the national anthem realm? Thank you very much.

Chief Executive: I have been in a good dialogue with the responsible department in Beijing which takes care of Hong Kong affairs, which is the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council. Therefore, the Hong Kong situation has well been reported to the Central Government throughout the period. What I would like to report to the leaders when I will be in Beijing is to reflect the overall situation of Hong Kong in all regards. Then, of course, I will be touching on the situation in Hong Kong in relation to how the pandemic situation is, and I'll also be explaining what I have done in the period, on one hand controlling the COVID and at the same time maintaining the economy to run so that it will be allowed to be strengthened. I have been reflecting all these concerns, so I am very sure that the Central People's Government has already had a good understanding of the present situation of Hong Kong, but having an opportunity to report face-to-face and make direct response to questions that may be raised by the leaders will help explain Hong Kong's situation more thoroughly. My experience during my communication with the leaders is that they always listen earnestly to and consider my ideas seriously. So I think this is what will happen during my reporting to the leaders of the situation of Hong Kong.

Of course, I will be reflecting the concern of Hong Kong people, whose voices are already heard by the Central People's Government. And it is something that I think we are all working hard to see how it can be done, because we all know very well that while we want to do this, we have to consider how we do it in an orderly fashion, maintaining a good control of the risks and the potential problems that may arise when new arrangements are introduced. But there is a very strong, common commitment to ensure that things progress at good speed and, at the same time, with risks and issues under control.

As regards Google, we have repeatedly made our statement very clearly. The incorrect information of the Hong Kong national anthem, which is the national anthem of the People's Republic of China (PRC), is a serious matter. It is not just a piece of information that is wrongly reflected, such as business information, or day-to-day traffic matters or price matters. It is an important matter, because the national anthem represents the country, represents the people, and also represents the dignity of the people and the country. So it has to be taken seriously by whoever provides that information to ensure its accuracy. We will, of course, be contacting Google to see how we can rectify the situation.

We all know very well that Google has the means to do it; it's a question of whether Google chooses to do it. If it chooses not to do it, then I think it has a lot to explain. Its company policy has stated that they will remove content for legal reasons. It is a very clear fact that playing our Hong Kong national anthem, which is the PRC's national anthem, with a song which is not (the national anthem), is an offence in Hong Kong, because it constitutes insult which contradicts and contravenes our law on national anthem. So it is an offence for somebody to play a song, which is not the Hong Kong national anthem, which is also the national anthem of the PRC, because it constitutes insult. So, that content constitutes an offense. It conforms to Google's policy of removing content for legal reasons.

The second thing that I have noticed is that Google's policy also says that it will not allow content that misrepresents or misleads. Obviously, it misrepresents our Hong Kong national anthem, and it misleads people to think that the song that has been searched as purportedly the Hong Kong national anthem is the actual Hong Kong national anthem. So it is presenting content that misrepresents and misleads.

I think that Google is a responsible company, and we will be in touch with Google. We hope that we can work together for a solution to ensure that the right content is provided to the public, and that they will conform to the company policy to remove content for legal reasons and to remove content that misrepresents and misleads. And I think that an organisation as big as Google will take these things seriously.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Result of tenders of People's Bank of China RMB Bills held on December 20, 2022

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

Result of tenders of People's Bank of China RMB Bills held on December 20, 2022:

Tender Result

Tender Date	:	December 20, 2022
Bills available for Tender	:	Six-month RMB Bills
Issuer	:	The People's Bank of China
Issue Number	:	BCHKFP22046
Issue Date	:	December 22, 2022
Maturity Date	:	June 22, 2023 (or the closest coupon payment date)
Application Amount	:	RMB 19,000.5 million
Issue Amount	:	RMB 5,000 million
Average accepted Coupon Rate	:	2.07%
Highest accepted Coupon Rate (Bills' Coupon)	:	2.20%
Lowest accepted Coupon Rate	:	1.95%
Allocation Ratio	:	Approximately 92.23%

HKSAR Government welcomes Guangdong Provincial Government's announcement of arrangement for policy of Quota-free Scheme for Hong Kong Private Cars Travelling to Guangdong via the Hong

Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge

â€‹The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (December 20) warmly welcomed the Guangdong Provincial Government's announcement on the latest progress of the Quota-free Scheme for Hong Kong Private Cars Travelling to Guangdong via the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) (the Scheme).

The Guangdong Provincial Government and the HKSAR Government are now working on the detailed implementation arrangements of the Scheme in accordance with the approval of the State Council, and will strive to announce detailed arrangements in the first quarter of 2023 and implement the Scheme within 2023, subject to factors such as the anti-epidemic requirements of Guangdong and Hong Kong.

A spokesman for the Transport and Logistics Bureau said, "We are deeply grateful to the Central Government and the Guangdong Provincial Government for their strong support for the Scheme all along. The State Council has announced the customs guarantee-free policy for Hong Kong private cars under the Scheme last month. Together with this announcement of the Guangdong Provincial Government, the Scheme is now moving towards its realisation."

The spokesman stressed that the Scheme is planned for implementation in 2023 after taking into account the epidemic situation, and the preparatory work has largely been completed. The HKSAR Government has finalised with the Guangdong Provincial Government and the relevant Mainland authorities the fundamental arrangements for the implementation of the Scheme, including eligibility requirements of applicants, vehicles and drivers, duration of stay, insurance requirements, vehicle inspection, application procedures and formalities, etc (details have been set out in the overview of the Scheme at the Annex). The HKSAR Government will continue to maintain close liaison with the Guangdong Provincial Government to confirm the exact timing of implementation. Its aim is to implement the Scheme as soon as possible to enable Hong Kong residents to drive to Guangdong via the HZMB, thereby strengthening the connectivity within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

The HKSAR Government announced earlier that it is pressing ahead with the Scheme, under which eligible Hong Kong private cars will be allowed to travel between Hong Kong and Guangdong via the HZMB without the need to obtain regular quotas when the epidemic is under control and the normal flow of people between the Mainland and Hong Kong has gradually resumed, so as to enable Hong Kong residents to drive to Guangdong for business, visiting families or sight-seeing on a short-term basis. The State Council has also announced the customs guarantee-free policy for eligible Hong Kong private cars under the Scheme on November 25, 2022. The policy will allow Hong Kong private cars participating in the Scheme to be exempted from paying customs duties or applying for guarantee arrangements with Mainland Customs, thereby simplifying the application procedures and reducing the handling fees.