

CHP investigates 19 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, April 2, the CHP was investigating 19 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 11 500 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 11 499 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, 12 are imported cases and one is a local case with an unknown source, while the remaining six cases are epidemiologically linked with local cases.

A total of 130 cases have been recorded in the past 14 days (March 19 to April 1), including 48 local cases of which 15 are from unknown sources.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

As a passenger flight (SQ882) operated by Singapore Airlines from Singapore to Hong Kong on March 31, 2021, had one passenger confirmed to have COVID-19 through specimen collected at the DH's Temporary Specimen Collection Centre, while three passengers failed to comply with requirements specified under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H), the DH thus invoked the regulation to prohibit landing of passenger flights from Singapore operated by Singapore Airlines in Hong Kong from April 3 to 16, 2021.

Meanwhile, the CHP reminded those who had visited specified venues under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the compulsory testing notice. The Regulation also requires all household members of close contacts of confirmed cases to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test within a specified period according to compulsory testing notices published in the Gazette. The public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop and undergo testing as soon as possible.

The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk).

The CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly

urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

The spokesman said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps). After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link wa.me/85296171823?text=hi, they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled,

performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;

- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

Judgments provides explanations on conviction

In light of comments arising from the conviction of seven defendants who were charged with "organising an unauthorised assembly" and "knowingly taking part in an unauthorised assembly" at the District Court yesterday, the Department of Justice (DoJ) today (April 2) issued the following statement:

No one should comment on cases in respect of which legal proceedings are still ongoing as the matter is sub judice.

We must reiterate that prosecutorial decisions made by the DoJ are based on evidence, applicable laws and the Prosecution Code. The Prosecution Code explicitly stipulates that prosecutors must not be influenced by political, media or individual interest. Cases are handled with the same benchmark irrespective of the political beliefs or background of defendants. Prosecution would only be commenced and continued if there is sufficient admissible evidence to support a reasonable prospect of conviction and it is in the public interest to do so. Article 63 of the Basic Law expressly guarantees that all prosecutions are free from any interference.

The Government respects and attaches great importance to the rights and freedoms (including the freedoms of assembly, of procession and of demonstration) protected under the Basic Law. However, such rights and freedoms are not absolute and maybe subject to restrictions which are, amongst others, in the interests of public order (ordre public) and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. Over the years, notified public processions and public meetings have taken place peacefully and orderly.

It is regrettable to note that the convictions have drawn unfair criticisms with political overtones. Any assertion to suggest that "Beijing eroding Hong Kong's freedoms" is totally baseless. Under the Basic Law, criminal prosecutions are handled by the DoJ independently.

The judgment has set out the reasons for the verdict which is publicly available at the Judiciary's website

(legalref.judiciary.hk/lrs/common/ju/ju_frame.jsp?DIS=134671&currpage=T). Members of the public are well advised to read the judgment so as to be properly and fairly informed.

Public invited to vote for their favourite Online Flower Show garden plots to win prizes (with photos)

The Online Hong Kong Flower Show 2021 (Online Flower Show), presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, is holding an online voting activity for people to vote for their favourite Oriental-style garden plot and their favourite Western-style garden plot from the 18 districts. Members of the public are invited to vote and get a chance to win prizes.

Eighteen Oriental-style or Western-style garden plots are being exhibited at designated parks in Hong Kong until April 19. The public may also enjoy an entertaining 3D virtual tour through the dedicated website (www.hkflowershow.hk) that guides them on a 360-degree virtual journey to these exquisite garden plots. The garden plots have distinctive designs ranging from simple and elegant arrangements of Chinese pavilions, tranquil Japanese gardens and beautiful Thai decorations to the colourful and delightful displays of Western-style gardens.

The Online Flower Show has the overall theme "City of Flowers, City of Love" and the rhododendron as its theme flower. The theme flower display currently running at Kowloon Park covers a variety of rhododendrons, together with an attractive and spectacular mosaiculture display featuring seven large rhododendrons, each over 1.5 metres in height. The wonderful mosaic is made up of more than 7 000 mokara orchids and dendrobiums. While the Tulip Display at the Central and Western District Promenade (Central Section) ended on March 31, the virtual tour is still available on the website. In addition, the public can take selfies with these two thematic displays via the "LCSD Plusss" Instagram filters to enjoy a virtual on-site experience.

The Online Flower Show also showcases an interesting animation on the legend of the rhododendron; rhododendron blossoms in the city; demonstrations on flower appreciation, flower photography and flower planting tips; and details of previous flower shows and theme flowers. There are also interactive games involving horticultural knowledge, and WhatsApp stickers for downloading and sharing the fun with family and friends.



Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (April 2) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in

public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the service demand surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rate in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.