

## **Hospital Authority statement on the dissemination of unfounded allegations towards the COVID-19 vaccination scheme by some healthcare workers**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for the Hospital Authority (HA) made the following statement today (March 17) regarding the dissemination of unfounded allegations towards the COVID-19 vaccination scheme by some healthcare workers:

While strongly refuting the unfounded allegations by some healthcare workers on the vaccination scheme, the HA strongly urges them to stop further promulgation of the information and avoid misleading the public.

As a public healthcare organisation, the HA has always encouraged members of the public and healthcare workers to receive vaccination. The significance of vaccination is self-protection and the protection of the people around by preventing transmission of the virus. As an important step in managing the epidemic, receiving vaccination is important for oneself and others.

To dovetail the monitoring of vaccine safety, healthcare workers of public hospitals will report to the Department of Health any serious or unexpected adverse events following immunisation of COVID-19 according to established mechanism. The expert committee of the Department of Health will examine the cases and conduct causality assessments. The assessments will be announced regularly in "the summary report on the safety monitoring of COVID-19 vaccines in Hong Kong". Public announcement will also be made promptly for serious cases, to ensure timely update for members of the public.

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## **Hong Kong new film talents shine at Chicago's Asian Pop-Up Cinema**

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in New York (HKETONY) is collaborating with the Asian Pop-up Cinema (APUC) in Chicago to present five newly released Hong Kong movies in its spring season film festival, running from March 15 to May 1.

"Keep Rolling", a directorial debut from veteran art director Man Lim-chung, kicked off the Hong Kong series today (March 17, Chicago time). In this documentary, the audience will be able to probe into the idiosyncratic world of Ann Hui, one of the most influential filmmakers in Hong Kong.

Also featured at the festival are "Elisa's Day", directed by Alan Fung, a winner of the Hong Kong's First Feature Film Initiative, "One Second Champion" by Chiu Sin-hang, who is the lead vocalist of a local Hong Kong band, "I Still Remember" by Lik Ho and "Ready O/R Knot" by Anselm Chan.

In her video remarks, the HKETONY Director Candy Nip thanked the APUC and United States audiences for their support to Hong Kong movies. The five selected films showcase the energy and dynamics of Hong Kong's film industry, and the outstanding talents of emerging directors.

To promote the long-term development of the local film industry, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has introduced various supportive measures, including the First Feature Film Initiative, to provide impetus to Hong Kong cinema. Under the scheme, winning new directors and their film production teams will receive funding from the Film Development Fund to implement their winning film proposals. Since its launch in 2013, the scheme has nurtured many new film talents.

For more information about this season's Hong Kong series at APUC, please visit the HKETONY website:

[www.hketousa.gov.hk/usa/arts-cultural/feature-madeinhk12.html](http://www.hketousa.gov.hk/usa/arts-cultural/feature-madeinhk12.html)

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## **Government to gazette compulsory testing notice**

The Government will exercise the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publish in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at seven specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

Currently, in all districts in Hong Kong, if one or more new confirmed cases are found in the residential buildings (including buildings for both commercial and residential uses), or there are sewage samples tested positive which implied possible infection risks, the buildings will be included in the compulsory testing notice.

For testing targeting at workplaces, if one or more confirmed cases are found in a workplace, it will be included in the compulsory testing notice.

Six premises fulfilling the above criteria and one school were included in the compulsory testing notice today (March 17).

Details of the compulsory testing notice are as follows:

1. Any person who had been present at any specified premises listed in Part A of Annex 1 for more than two hours at any time during the period from March 4 to March 17, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by March 20, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between March 15 and March 17, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.
2. Any person who had been present at any specified premises listed in Part B of Annex 1 for more than two hours at any time during the period from March 4 to March 17, 2021 (including but not limited to full-time, part-time and relief staff, students and visitors), have to undergo testing by March 20, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing choose to undergo testing using the specimen bottles distributed by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP), they have to return the specimen bottle with the sample by March 22, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between March 15 and March 17, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau reminds the public that in accordance with the compulsory testing notice issued earlier, all household members of close contacts are required to undergo compulsory testing. Any person who had lived with a person who is placed under quarantine pursuant to section 22 of the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A) (person under quarantine) in the same residential unit on the date of commencement of quarantine or during the 14 days before that day, and who becomes aware of the quarantine of the person under quarantine when the relevant quarantine has not yet been completed, have to undergo testing within two days of he/she becoming aware of the person under quarantine has been placed under quarantine and report to the Government the result of the test by phone (at 6275 6901), fax (at 2530 5872) or email (ct@csb.gov.hk) within three days of undergoing the test.

The Government will set up mobile specimen collection stations at Yue On Court in Ap Lei Chau and Beech Street in Tai Kok Tsui tomorrow (March 18). Please see Annex 2 for details of service scope. The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations in various districts providing free COVID-19 nucleic acid testing services for the general public are stated in Annex 2. Apart from mobile specimen collection stations, persons subject to compulsory testing can also choose to attend any of the community testing centres in all districts to receive testing free of charge.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable) at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html)) for testing;
2. To attend any of the community testing centres (see the list at [www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/));
3. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from any of the 121 post offices, vending machines set up at 20 MTR stations or 47 designated general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times, at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html));
4. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority;
5. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the Department of Health (DH) and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List\\_of\\_recognised\\_laboratories\\_RTPCR.pdf](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories_RTPCR.pdf)); or
6. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

The spokesman cautioned that testing received at accident and emergency departments of the Hospital Authority or during hospital stays, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the community testing centres."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notification containing result of the test for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Furthermore, persons subject to testing under the compulsory testing notices should, as far as reasonably practicable, take appropriate personal disease prevention measures including wearing a mask and maintaining hand hygiene, and, unless for the purpose of undergoing the specified test, stay at their place of residence and avoid going out until the test result is ascertained as far as possible.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm. If persons subject to compulsory testing plan to conduct testing at any of the community testing centres, they can check the centre's appointment status in advance. The hotlines of the community testing centres are available

at [www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/info/](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/info/).

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to the relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Relevant officers of different government departments are empowered to perform certain functions under the relevant Regulations under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599), including requesting individuals to provide information and assistance when necessary. Any person who fails to comply with the relevant request commits an offence and would be liable to a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). Collection and use of any personal data for conducting COVID-19 tests must meet the requirements under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). Government departments or testing service providers which handle the relevant information may provide the data to DH or other relevant departments for anti-epidemic purpose as necessary. The workflow does not involve the provision of any personal data to organisations or persons outside Hong Kong.

The spokesman said, "The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or contacted confirmed cases), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

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## **HKSAR Government condemns US' latest move under so-called "Hong Kong Autonomy Act"**

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) today (March 17) condemned the latest move by the United States (US) Department of State under an update to the so-called "Hong Kong Autonomy Act", which continued to put 24 officials of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the HKSAR Government on a sanctions list.

A Government spokesman said, "We are extremely disappointed that the current US administration, instead of rectifying the blatant mistake made by its predecessor, has chosen to pursue the same wrongful path of disregarding international norms and interfering in HKSAR affairs, which are internal matters of the PRC. We deeply regret that the US administration has clearly

not taken heed of the collective voice of some 70 countries which had spoken in support of the PRC in respect of two key decisions to uphold the principle of 'One Country, Two Systems' at the 46th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

"HKSAR's high degree of autonomy is guaranteed under 'One Country, Two Systems'; but foreign entities have repeatedly ignored this fundamental principle and the correct relationship between 'One Country' and 'Two Systems'. HKSAR is an inalienable part of the PRC and is directly accountable to the Central People's Government. National security and political structure are matters within the purview of the Central Authorities.

"As the highest organ of state power, the National People's Congress (NPC) has the constitutional authority to make the Decisions to improve the electoral system and safeguard national security in the HKSAR in March 2021 and May 2020 respectively. Taking into account the actual situation in Hong Kong, both Decisions are timely and necessary. In respect of the national security legislation, its positive effect, in restoring peace and stability and safeguarding individual rights and freedoms, has been felt throughout Hong Kong, by Hong Kong residents as well as expatriates living and working in Hong Kong.

"The NPC's recent Decision to improve the electoral system in the HKSAR is to ensure 'patriots administering Hong Kong'. No country would allow its governance power to be vested in people who are not patriotic and who will endanger the interests of the country. Events in the past years clearly revealed that there were people who had exploited existing loopholes in the electoral system to enter the political institutions and used that platform to advocate for 'Hong Kong independence', engage in acts of subversion, and even collude with external elements to endanger national security. They posed huge risks to Hong Kong's stability and prosperity, and called for decisive actions.

"To countries that consider national security to be of paramount importance on their own soil yet threaten officials of other countries for acting to defend their territory, the adoption of double standards is evident. Any claim that HKSAR's high degree of autonomy and freedoms have been undermined by the NPC's Decisions is also totally groundless.

"The US' 'sanctions' will not create an obligation for financial institutions under Hong Kong law. Our financial institutions and our financial system as a whole are robust and resilient. They will continue to operate normally and smoothly despite any undue pressure from the US.

"The Chief Executive and HKSAR Government officials who have been targeted by the US administration over the past year will not be intimidated by these hostile acts of hegemony. They will continue to discharge their duty to safeguard 'One Country, Two Systems' and national security in HKSAR in accordance with the law without fear or anxiety," said the Government spokesman.

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# Precautionary measures and face-to-face class arrangement during Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination period

Given the volatile situation of the COVID-19 epidemic, the Education Bureau (EDB) and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) have been communicating closely with the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health and the education sector to ensure the 2021 HKDSE will be able to commence on April 23 under safe circumstances.

A spokesman for the EDB said today (March 17) that the health and safety of the candidates and examination administrators are the prime concern. As the HKDSE examinations of the Core Subjects involve many candidates, the HKEAA, having taken into account CHP's advice, has enhanced the precautionary measures, including requesting the schools that will serve as examination centres to make use of their school halls and classrooms of different floors as far as possible to segregate the candidates, with a view to increasing the social distance and reducing the chances for candidates to contact each other.

To complement with the needs of stepping up precautionary measures, the EDB announced that schools providing examination venues for this year's HKDSE should suspend face-to-face classes from April 26 to 30 and May 3 to release more classrooms for examination venues and teachers for assuming the role of invigilators. Schools may decide whether to arrange online teaching for other classes based on their school-based circumstances. The EDB is thankful for the collaboration of schools and teachers endeavouring for the smooth implementation of the HKDSE.

The HKEAA will issue a letter to inform schools of the above arrangements.