

North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre to commence service tomorrow (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) has completed the preparation work for the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre (HKICC) and will start admission of COVID-19 confirmed patients with suitable clinical conditions tomorrow morning (February 26).

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, visited the HKICC today (February 25) to express gratitude to the healthcare staff and officiated at the service commencement ceremony together with Deputy Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Ms Qiu Hong and the HA Chairman, Mr Henry Fan. The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan; the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong; the North Lantau Hospital Hospital Governing Committee Chairman, Professor Raymond Liang; and the HA Chief Executive, Dr Tony Ko, among others, also joined the ceremony.

Mr Fan thanked the Central Government and various departments and teams of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government for their support to complete the construction of the HKICC in only four months. He also thanked the staff of the HA for the teamwork and collaboration in preparing the HKICC to commence in a timely manner and cope with the upcoming challenge of the epidemic.

A spokesperson for the HA said, "The HKICC will first open a ward with 48 isolation beds tomorrow to admit COVID-19 confirmed patients, aged between 16 and 65, with mild or moderate clinical conditions. Keeping in view the developments of the epidemic, the HKICC could progressively take over the patients staying in the community treatment facility for more efficient deployment of manpower and resources."

Following the handover of the HKICC to the HA in January, Kowloon West Cluster, responsible for the management and operation of the HKICC, immediately started the preparation work, including installation and calibration of medical equipment, performing various tests, formulating service operation guidelines and providing appropriate staff training, to ensure that the relevant facilities are ready as early as possible.

"There are six two-storey ward buildings with a total of 816 isolation beds at the HKICC. All wards are equipped with hospital-grade isolation facilities. Unlike the community treatment facility in an exhibition hall, the HKICC is able to provide intravenous medication and oxygen therapy, which can help alleviate the pressure for isolation beds in public hospitals. In

addition, the six independent blocks of ward buildings can be activated in phases according to the evolving epidemic situation, allowing more flexibility in manpower deployment and operation arrangements," the spokesperson said.

"Apart from routine tests for clinical management, the laboratory at the medical centre is equipped with state-of-the-art and fully automated laboratory equipment to handle a maximum of 1 500 specimens per day and augment the overall laboratory capacity of public hospitals by about 15 per cent. The overall testing capability of the Hong Kong healthcare system will be further enhanced," the spokesperson added.



[Response to media enquiries](#)

In response to media enquiries about the funding arrangement for the expenditure for safeguarding national security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), a Government spokesman said the following today (February 25):

The funding arrangement for the expenditure for safeguarding national security in the HKSAR is made in strict accordance with the relevant requirements in The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the

National Security Law). According to Article 12 of the National Security Law, the HKSAR shall establish the Committee for Safeguarding National Security. The Committee shall be responsible for affairs relating to and assume primary responsibility for safeguarding national security in the HKSAR. It shall be under the supervision of and accountable to the Central People's Government. Other provisions in Part 2 of Chapter II of the National Security Law stipulate the duties of the Committee, the Police Force and the Department of Justice.

According to Article 19 of the National Security Law, the Financial Secretary of the HKSAR shall, upon approval of the Chief Executive, appropriate from the general revenue a special fund to meet the expenditure for safeguarding national security and approve the establishment of relevant posts, which are not subject to any restrictions in the relevant provisions of the laws in force in the HKSAR. The Financial Secretary shall submit an annual report on the control and management of the fund for this purpose to the Legislative Council of the HKSAR. To this end, the Financial Secretary has made a provision of \$8 billion to meet the expenditure for safeguarding national security in the next few years and will submit a report to the Legislative Council in due course.

According to Article 48 of the National Security Law, the Central People's Government shall establish in the HKSAR an office for safeguarding national security. The Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR shall perform its mandate for safeguarding national security and exercise relevant powers in accordance with the law. Article 51 of the National Security Law stipulates that the Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR shall be funded by the Central People's Government. As such, the above-mentioned provision of \$8 billion has nothing to do with the expenditure of the Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR.

According to Article 14 of the National Security Law, no institution, organisation or individual in the HKSAR shall interfere with the work of the Committee for Safeguarding National Security of the HKSAR. Information relating to the work of the Committee shall not be subject to disclosure. Therefore, except for the above, we have no further information to provide in relation to the relevant provision.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, February 25, 2021 is 100.4 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

LegCo Finance Committee meeting

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The meeting of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Finance Committee originally scheduled for 3pm tomorrow (February 26) in Conference Room 1 of the LegCo Complex will be held at 3.45pm (or an earlier time between 3.30pm and 3.45pm).

HKSAR Government to hold “Greater Bay Area – Starting Line to a Bright Future” ceremony tomorrow

To mark the second anniversary of the promulgation of the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government will hold a ceremony named "Greater Bay Area – Starting Line to a Bright Future" tomorrow (February 26) with a theme of youth development. The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam; the Vice-Governor of Guangdong Province, Mr Zhang Xin (via recorded video); the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung; the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai; the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong; the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui; the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit; and the Vice-Chairman of the Youth Development Commission, Mr Lau Ming-wai, will attend the ceremony.

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The "Greater Bay Area – Starting Line to a Bright Future" ceremony will be broadcast online from 2pm to 3pm tomorrow at webcast.info.gov.hk and on the Facebook page of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (www.facebook.com/cmab.gov.hk/). The video recording of the ceremony will also be uploaded to the dedicated Greater Bay Area website (www.bayarea.gov.hk/en/symposium/index.html).