

CHP investigates 12 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, February 23, the CHP was investigating 12 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 10 897 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 10 896 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, one is an imported case.

A total of 217 cases have been recorded in the past 14 days (February 9 to 22), including 177 local cases of which 70 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).

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 public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop.

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, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. 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;
 - Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
 - 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.
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Mainland fisherman suspected of operating illegally in Hong Kong waters charged (with photo)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (February 23) laid a charge against a Mainland fisherman suspected of engaging in illegal fishing in Hong Kong waters near Shek Ngau Chau.

AFCD officers intercepted a Mainland fishing vessel suspected to be carrying out illegal fishing by gill net in the above-mentioned waters at about 5pm yesterday (February 22) for investigation. Some fishing gear and catch were seized on board.

The charge was laid against the Mainland fisherman found on board the vessel today. He was suspected to have violated the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171) (the Ordinance). He will appear at Fanling Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (February 24).

Only a vessel registered under the Ordinance can be used for fishing in Hong Kong waters. Regardless of the type of fishing gear used, a non-local fishing vessel is not allowed to carry out fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. Any offender on conviction is liable to a maximum penalty of a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for six months.

An AFCD spokesman said, "The Government is committed to cracking down on illegal fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. The AFCD will continue to step up patrols and stringently enforce the law."



S for IT holds virtual engagement sessions with HK deputies to NPC and HK members of CPPCC (with photo)

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, held virtual engagement sessions with Hong Kong deputies to the National People's Congress (NPC) and Hong Kong members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) on February 22 and 23 respectively to brief them on the latest developments of Hong Kong's innovation and technology, and exchange views on various topics before they attend meetings of the NPC and the CPPCC to be held in Beijing next month. The Permanent Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Ms Annie Choi, also joined the engagement sessions.

Mr Sit expressed gratitude to the Hong Kong deputies to the NPC and the Hong Kong members of the CPPCC for their attention to Hong Kong's innovation and technology development. He hoped that they can continue to render support for the Government's work in driving innovation and technology development. Hong Kong will continue to leverage its strengths to serve the country's needs, and actively participate in the nation's development, particularly in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area into an international innovation and technology hub, and the new economic development pattern of domestic and international dual circulation.

"With the plentiful development potential in the Greater Bay Area, grasping the development opportunities in the Area is the top priority of the HKSAR Government. To strengthen the collaboration between Hong Kong and Shenzhen, the two strong players in the area of innovation and technology will join hands to develop the Shenzhen/Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone. The joint development of the Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Zone and the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park at the Lok Ma Chau Loop will foster establishing 'one zone, two parks'. We will also nurture and absorb innovation and technology talents through different initiatives such as the InnoHK research clusters which promote global research and development collaboration, re-industrialisation, and smart city," Mr Sit added.

Following the setting up of the Innovation and Technology Bureau, the current-term Government has been heavily investing and driving innovation and technology development along eight major areas with the staunch support of the country. These efforts are gradually delivering results, and the overall innovation and technology ecosystem in Hong Kong has been significantly improved. The gross domestic expenditure on research and development of Hong Kong increased from \$16.7 billion in 2014 to \$26.3 billion in 2019. Venture capital investment in Hong Kong increased from \$1.24 billion in 2014 to \$9.9 billion in 2019, showing an increase of seven times. The number of local start-ups also increased from around 1 100 in 2014 to over 3 300 in 2020, and the manpower employed increased from 2 400 to 10 700. In addition, Hong Kong

has become the world's second largest financing hub for biotechnology.

Hong Kong's performance in innovation and technology development is also well recognised internationally. According to the World Digital Competitiveness Yearbook 2020 announced earlier by the International Institute for Management Development in Lausanne, Switzerland, Hong Kong climbed from 11th place in 2018 to fifth place globally. As for the ranking related to technological infrastructure, the global ranking of Hong Kong rose from 18th place to seventh place. The Digital Intelligence Index report jointly released by Mastercard and the Fletcher School at Tufts University of the United States in 2020 found that Hong Kong has become one of the world's most digitally advanced economies, ranking second and third in the Asia-Pacific region and the world respectively.



Proprietor fined for violation of safety legislation

A proprietor was fined \$60,000 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (February 23) for violation of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance and the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Lifting Appliances and Lifting Gear) Regulations. The prosecutions were launched by the Labour Department.

The case involved a fatal accident that occurred on June 1, 2020, at a recycling yard in Yuen Long. Bundles of scrapped metal tubes were being unloaded from a lorry-mounted crane and stacked in piles. While a worker was standing on a pile of metal tubes to untie a bundle of metal tubes stacked at a higher level, the bundle suddenly dispersed. Some of the dispersed metal tubes struck the worker and caused him to fall to the ground. He was sent to the hospital and died the same day.

Fraudulent website related to Union Bancaire Priv e, UBP SA

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Union Bancaire Priv e, UBP SA on fraudulent website, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the website concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the website should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.