

[CE holds virtual engagement session with HK members of CPPCC \(with photo\)](#)

Following the meeting with Hong Kong deputies to the National People's Congress (NPC) yesterday (February 8), the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, held an engagement session with 90 Hong Kong members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) via video conferencing today (February 9) to exchange views on such topics as the developments of Hong Kong and the Mainland before they attend the meetings of the NPC and the CPPCC to be held in Beijing next month. Members of the CPPCC spoke enthusiastically during the meeting, which lasted for more than two hours, and Mrs Lam listened attentively to their views on various areas, including their concerns about vaccination and expectations for early resumption of travel between people in the two places and local economic activities. She stressed that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government will spare no effort in fighting the epidemic and taking forward the vaccination programme.

Noting that how Hong Kong is integrated into the overall development of the nation is a crucial issue, with the country's 14th Five-Year Plan, the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the Belt and Road Initiative to bring enormous opportunities to Hong Kong, she said that it is of paramount importance to Hong Kong's future, particularly with regard to youth development. She expressed the hope that Hong Kong members of the CPPCC will work together with the HKSAR Government to strive for the support of the Central Authorities as well as the co-operation of the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government to explore more room for Hong Kong's development.

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung; the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai; and the Director of the Chief Executive's Office, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, also attended the session.



All pigs on Yuen Long pig farm with samples tested positive for ASF virus earlier will be culled

As several samples taken from two sheds on a licensed pig farm in Wong Nai Tun, Yuen Long were tested positive for African Swine Fever (ASF) virus earlier, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (February 9) announced culling of all pigs on the farm.

A spokesman for the AFCD said, "Six pig samples were taken from an isolated shed were tested positive for ASF on February 4 and two more samples from another shed were tested positive too on February 6. It shows that the virus is spreading on the farm. The AFCD, after consulting international experts in the area, considered it prudent to cull all the pigs on the farm."

The spokesman explained, "Transporting pigs out of the farm has been suspended since ASF virus was detected on the farm. Culling all pigs on the farm is a prudent solution. The Department has liaised with the stakeholders and informed them of the decision. According to the contingency plan on ASF, the AFCD will cull the remaining some 3000 pigs in an orderly manner as the ground situation allows and as soon as possible. The pig owner will be compensated according to the established mechanism."

The spokesman further said, "So far, samples taken from the other three pig farms within three kilometres of the farm were all negative. As no abnormalities have been found during inspection of these farms, pigs on the three pig farms are allowed to be transported to slaughterhouses. For the sake of prudence, the AFCD will send in staff to inspect the pigs before they are transported out of the farms to ensure that only pigs in good health condition are allowed to be sent to slaughterhouses. Besides, the pig transportation vehicles of these three pig farms are not to transport pigs of other farms at the same time and to undergo thorough cleansing and disinfection before they leave the slaughterhouses."

The AFCD will continue to investigate and trace the source of ASF virus with international experts in the area, step up inspection of local pig farms and conduct tests if necessary to keep all local farms under close surveillance. The AFCD has also notified all farmers to alert the Department immediately if abnormal health conditions are observed in pigs.

The spokesman stressed that ASF is not a zoonotic disease and will not infect humans, hence does not cause any food safety risk. Pork cooked thoroughly is safe for consumption. Members of the public do not need to be concerned. Up till now, the incident affects only one pig farm but not the operation of slaughterhouses nor the overall supply of live pigs as live pigs from other sources can make it up.

As disposal operations take time, the AFCD releases updated operation

information every day on the departmental web page, www.afcd.gov.hk for the public.

Company fined \$110,000 and ordered to repay \$936,000 for contravening the Employment Ordinance

Sing Pao Newspaper Management Limited was prosecuted by the Labour Department (LD) for failing to pay wages, payment in lieu of notice, long service payment, annual leave pay and/or the sums awarded by the Labour Tribunal (LT) to seven employees in accordance with the Employment Ordinance (EO). The company was convicted at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (February 9) and fined a total of \$110,000. The company was also ordered by the court to compensate six of the employees a total outstanding sum of about \$936,000.

The company failed to pay to seven employees wages, payment in lieu of notice, long service payment and/or annual leave pay totalling about \$655,000 within seven days after the expiry of the wage periods or termination of employment as required by the EO. Also, the company failed to pay six employees the awarded sum of about \$936,000 within 14 days after the date set by the LT in accordance with the requirement of the EO.

"The ruling will disseminate a strong message to all employers that they have to pay wages, payment in lieu of notice, long service payment and annual leave pay to employees within the statutory time limit stipulated in the EO, as well as the sums awarded by the LT or the Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board," a spokesman for the LD said.

"The LD will not tolerate these offences and will spare no effort in enforcing the law and safeguarding employees' statutory rights," the spokesman added.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital announces passing away of COVID-19 patient

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) today (February 9) announced that a patient confirmed with COVID-19 passed away today.

An 87-year-old male patient (case number: 10578) with chronic diseases attended the Accident & Emergency Department of QEH on February 3 due to cough and shortness of breath. He was subsequently tested positive for COVID-19, and admitted to the isolation ward for treatment. His condition continued to deteriorate and he eventually succumbed at 6.54pm today.

The hospital is saddened about the passing away of the patient and would offer necessary assistance to his family.

Including the above patient, 182 COVID-19 confirmed patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

United Christian Hospital announces patient tested positive for COVID-19

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for United Christian Hospital (UCH) made the following announcement today (February 9) concerning a patient tested positive to COVID-19:

A 27-year-old male patient was admitted to UCH Accident and Emergency Department (AED) on February 8 due to fever. Medical staff arranged admission screening COVID-19 test for the patient according to established procedures and the test result was preliminary positive. He was transferred to isolation ward for further treatment and is currently in stable condition.

The hospital's infection control team conducted contact tracing accordingly. No patient was identified as a close contact. A nurse did not put on full personal protective equipment (PPE) while assisting in nasopharyngeal swab specimen collection for a short period. The nurse was classified as close contact and will be quarantined. Investigation is still underway. All healthcare workers are reminded to wear full PPE when performing high-risk medical procedures in the hospital.

The hospital has arranged thorough cleaning and disinfection of the areas in AED. UCH will continue to closely monitor the health condition of our staff and patients and communicate with the Centre for Health Protection about the latest situation.