

# Speech by CE at Opening of Dutch Days in Hong Kong (English only) (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Opening of Dutch Days in Hong Kong today (March 30):

Consul General (Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Hong Kong and Macao, Ms Annemieke Ruigrok), Mr Ching (Chief Executive Officer of Asia, Sotheby's, Mr Kevin Ching), Ms Lee (Director of Asia Week Hong Kong, Ms Candice Lee), ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It gives me great pleasure to be here for the opening of this year's Dutch Days in Hong Kong. The Consul General has been kind enough to send my office an email to check on the possibility of the Chief Executive coming to officiate at the Dutch Days. I said, "Of course." There are at least two good reasons for me to come to this event. First, Hong Kong is very blessed to have a very robust consular community. We have over 60 diplomatic consular representations in Hong Kong, and I have always been encouraging them to showcase their culture, their education, even their cuisine and their wine in Hong Kong. Throughout the year, we now have Le French May in the month of May; we have the Dutch Days before the Le French May in April; and in autumn, we will have the Japan Autumn Festival. And I was told that later in the year, we will be welcoming the German Week in Hong Kong. Thank you very much, Consul General, for bringing us these wonderful events. And secondly, particularly for the Dutch Days, I have been writing foreword for you on a few occasions. This is really the time for me to come personally to congratulate the Consulate for organising this wonderful event in Hong Kong.

The month-long festival of all things delightfully Dutch is now in its fifth year of showcasing the Netherlands' remarkable culture, creativity and innovation. This year's theme, "Rembrandt as Innovator," responds to the 350th anniversary of the death of Rembrandt, the great Dutch painter and creative genius. Dutch Days will feature a variety of events in celebration of this great painter, introducing to Hong Kong people his masterful art and his life.

And there's much more Dutch to look forward to, including a week-long film festival, sustainability seminars targeting water management – another Dutch art in itself – and plastics recycling. Both will be led by Dutch experts and organised in concert with local universities. A family fun day is also on tap, showcasing the diverse culture of the Netherlands. I'm told that among the programme will feature a primer on the making of poffertjes – the delectable, pocket-sized Dutch pancakes which I am sure will be enjoyed by adults and children alike.

There is much we can learn from the Netherlands, which is why I'm so heartened by the expanding connections between our two economies and our two

peoples. Last year, the Netherlands were Hong Kong's third-largest merchandise trading partner in the European Union, with Hong Kong people particularly keen about Dutch milk and milk products, which made up one fourth of our imports from the Netherlands. Last year, as well, we welcomed the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mr Mark Rutte, to Hong Kong – the first Dutch Prime Minister ever to visit us. Among other things, the Prime Minister witnessed the signing of a Working Holiday Programme agreement between us. The agreement, which took effect in January this year, enables our respective young people to spend up to 12 months enjoying the distinctive culture and lifestyle of our two places.

Regrettably I was out of town when the Prime Minister visited Hong Kong, but I did have the honour to meet him in Davos at the World Economic Forum in January this year. We were both delighted to learn that Hong Kong youth are very keen to go to the Netherlands under the Working Holiday Programme, with the quota of 100 more or less filled up already. I hope that the Netherlands could favourably consider increasing the quota in the future, such that more young people will have the opportunity to experience the beautiful country and the diverse culture of the Netherlands.

My thanks to the Consul General, and the Consulate General for the Kingdom of the Netherlands, for its exemplary efforts in organising Dutch Days in Hong Kong, year after year. My thanks also to Asia Week Hong Kong, Dutch Days' co-organiser, as well as the event sponsors and supporting organisations, for bringing Dutch Days in Hong Kong to dazzling life.

Thank you very much.



# Cluster of respiratory infection cases in Siu Lam Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Siu Lam Hospital made the following announcement today (March 30):

Three patients (aged 25 to 70) in a female ward for severe intellectual disability had presented with respiratory symptoms since March 29. Appropriate viral tests had been arranged for the patients. The patients concerned are being treated under isolation with stable condition.

Admission to the ward has been suspended and restricted visiting has been imposed. Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. All other patients in the ward are under close surveillance.

The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow up.

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# CHP investigates case of severe paediatric enterovirus infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 30) investigating a case of severe paediatric enterovirus (EV) infection, and again urged the public and institutions to maintain strict hand, personal and environmental hygiene.

The case involves a one-month-old baby boy with good past health, who has presented with fever since March 28. He was taken to the Accident and Emergency Department of Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital on the same day and was admitted for management. The patient has been in a stable condition.

His cerebrospinal fluid specimen tested positive for EV upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis were meningitis and encephalitis.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no recent travel history. His elder sister had developed fever recently. She did not seek medical attention and had recovered. Other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far. Investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP said that as EV infection is transmitted by

direct contact with nose and throat discharges, the public should be vigilant and observe the following preventive measures:

- Wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet and changing diapers;
- Cover the mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing;
- Maintain good ventilation; and
- Thoroughly clean toys or appliances which are contaminated by nasal or oral secretions.

Children suffering from EV infection should stay at home and avoid contact with other children until they have recovered.

The public may visit the CHP's page on [hand, foot and mouth disease and EV71 infection](#) for more information.

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The case involves a one-month-old baby boy with good past health, who has presented with fever since March 28. He was taken to the Accident and Emergency Department of Tseung Kwan O Hospital on the same day and was admitted for management. The patient has been in a stable condition.

His cerebrospinal fluid specimen tested positive for EV upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis were meningitis and encephalitis.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no recent travel history. His elder sister had developed fever recently. She did not seek medical attention and had recovered. Other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far. Investigations are ongoing.

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## [Update on measles cases](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (March 30) investigating an additional case of measles infection, who is a worker at Cathay City.

The case involving a 26-year-old woman with good past health, who developed fever on March 25 and rash on March 28. She sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Department at Princess Margaret Hospital on the same day and was admitted for treatment. A laboratory test of her respiratory specimen was positive for measles virus. She is in a stable condition. She reported that she had had measles vaccination and had no travel history during the incubation period or communicable period.

According to the patient, she did not have contact with measles patients but frequently visited Hong Kong International Airport for lunch during the incubation period. Her father had once developed fever and cough and had sought medical attention. He has been in a stable condition and has recovered. Her other home contact has remained asymptomatic so far. They have been put under medical surveillance.

Upon notification of the case, the CHP immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. Initial investigations revealed that no contact has shown measles-related symptoms so far. The public places the patient visited during the communicable period are listed in the appendix.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "In view of the measles outbreak at the airport, the CHP yesterday launched a pilot programme there to conduct serology tests for people working at the airport on a voluntary basis, aiming to better grasp the overall immunity against measles among airport staff so that the measles control strategy can be fine-tuned.

"The pilot programme completed its target of recruiting 100 people who work at the airport for blood tests yesterday, hence the blood test station set up by the CHP for the purpose will not be opened today and tomorrow.

Airport staff participating in the pilot programme will be individually informed of the result by phone. Those who have tested positive for measles antibodies (IgG) are regarded as immune to measles and there will be no need for further vaccination."

After consideration of the pilot serology test results, the CHP will announce the subsequent arrangements for the measles vaccination exercise at the airport in due course.

The measles vaccination exercise at the airport aims to protect those working at the airport who are non-immune to measles. The target group refers to people working at the airport who are:

- (1) Non-locally born or born in Hong Kong from 1967 to 1984; and
- (2) Have not received two doses of measles vaccination; and
- (3) Have not been infected with measles before; and in particular
- (4) Those who need to take care of infants under one year old or pregnant women

The vaccination stations at the airport will remain open until April 4. Due to restrictions in the cold chain logistics arrangement for vaccine delivery, the service hours for Sunday will be adjusted. Details of the arrangement are as follows:

Venue:	Port Health Office Health Post (South Arrival Apron Passenger Vehicle Lounge, Level 4, Terminal 1)
	Multi-function Room, HKIA Tower (Level 5, Terminal 2)
Hours:	March 31: 9am to 1pm 2pm to 5pm
	April 1 to 4: 10am to 1pm 2pm to 5pm 6pm to 9pm

A total of 700 persons received measles vaccinations at the vaccination stations as at 5pm today, bringing the cumulative number of vaccinations given to 6 646. A hotline (2125 1122) is set up for public enquiries and operates from 9am to 5.45pm daily. As of 5pm today, the hotline had received a cumulative total of 2 268 enquiries.

Information on the confirmed measles cases in 2019 with their case summary has been uploaded onto the [CHP website](#).

The spokesman explained, "Measles is a highly infectious disease caused by the measles virus. It can be transmitted by airborne droplets or direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, and, less commonly, by articles soiled with nose and throat secretions. A patient can

pass the disease to other persons from four days before to four days after the appearance of skin rash."

The spokesman added, "The incubation period of measles ranges from seven days to up to 21 days. Contacts who are not immune to measles may develop relevant symptoms, such as fever, skin rash, cough, runny nose and red eyes, in the incubation period. They should observe if they develop such symptoms in the period. If symptoms arise, they should wear surgical masks, stop going to work or school and avoid going to crowded places. They should avoid contact with non-immune persons, especially persons with weakened immunity, pregnant women and children aged below one. They should also report their symptoms and prior travel history to healthcare workers so that appropriate infection control measures can be implemented at healthcare facilities to prevent any potential spread.

"Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles. Members of the public who are planning to travel to places with high incidence or outbreaks of measles should review their vaccination history and past medical history, especially people born outside Hong Kong who might not have received measles vaccination during childhood. The history of measles vaccination in Hong Kong is available in the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). Those who have not received two doses of measles-containing vaccines, who do not know their vaccination history or who have unknown immunity against measles are urged to consult their doctor for advice on vaccination at least two weeks before departure," the spokesman said.

Besides being vaccinated against measles, members of the public should take the following measures to prevent infection:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Wash hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;
- Clean used toys and furniture properly; and
- Persons with measles should be kept out of school till four days from the appearance of rash to prevent spread of the infection to non-immune persons in school.

For more information on measles, please visit the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). For news of measles outbreaks outside Hong Kong or the latest travel health advice, please visit the website of DH's [Travel Health Service](#).