

CE welcomes Central Government's promulgation of eight policy measures for taking forward development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (with photos/video)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (March 1) welcomed the eight policy measures introduced by the Central Government for taking forward the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. She said such measures could facilitate Hong Kong residents to develop, work and reside in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, as well as strengthen the convenient flow of people and goods within the Greater Bay Area.

These measures include the method for calculating "183 days" for paying individual income tax on the Mainland (that is, any stay of less than 24 hours on the Mainland will not count as a day of presence); providing tax relief by municipal governments to non-Mainland (including Hong Kong) high-end talents and talents in short supply tax by offsetting the tax differential between the two places; supporting the open recruitment of Hong Kong and Macao residents by public institutions in the Greater Bay Area; encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship in the nine Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area by the youth of Hong Kong and Macao; supporting higher education institutions and scientific research institutes from Hong Kong and Macao to participate in projects under Guangdong technology programmes; introducing immigration facilitation reform pilots schemes in the Greater Bay Area, facilitating vehicles from Hong Kong and Macao entering and exiting Mainland ports; and expanding the implementation scope of the connection with the Speedy Customs Clearance between Customs administrations.

Mrs Lam said that since the signing of the Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the Greater Bay Area by the National Development and Reform Commission and the governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao on July 1, 2017, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has kept in close contact with relevant central ministries and the governments of Guangdong and Macao to jointly draw up and introduce policy measures for the development of the Greater Bay Area.

Policy bureaux and departments of the HKSAR Government have also made great efforts in keeping close contact with various sectors of the community to gauge their views on ways to effectively take forward the development of the Greater Bay Area and measures needed to facilitate Hong Kong people to work, study and reside on the Mainland so that the measures introduced would better suit the needs of the community and the people of Hong Kong.

Mrs Lam said, "the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area promulgated by the Central Government on February 18 set out the directions guiding the development of the Greater Bay Area. It also signified the development of the Greater Bay Area had entered into a stage of its full fledged implementation."

Mrs Lam said that the policy measures currently introduced covered a wide range of areas raised by the HKSAR Government. We would follow up with the relevant ministries and the Guangdong Provincial Government in a practical manner to implement relevant policies, and continue to enhance liaison and engagement with relevant Mainland ministries and various sectors of the Hong Kong community. We would also take a proactive role in the development of the Greater Bay Area for more facilitation measures be introduced for Hong Kong people who live and work in the Greater Bay Area.

Mrs Lam, in her capacity as a member, attended this afternoon the second plenary meeting of the Leading Group for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area convened by the Vice Premier of the State Council, Mr Han Zheng, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, and the Director of the Chief Executive's Office, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, sat in on the meeting as working staff.

At today's meeting, the Leading Group reviewed the progress made in 2018 in taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area, and discussed the priority areas of work for 2019.

At the meeting, Mrs Lam reported the HKSAR Government's progress in developing an international innovation and technology hub in 2018. She said that based on last year's solid foundations, the HKSAR Government will continue to cooperate with relevant parties including the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Guangdong Provincial Government to implement various initiatives.



[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected dangerous drugs \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 3.95 kilograms of suspected ketamine and 690 grams of suspected cocaine with a total estimated market value of about \$2.31 million at Hong Kong International Airport on February 21 and today (March 1).

Customs officers inspected an air mail parcel from Germany on February 21 and found the batch of suspected ketamine concealed in five food packing boxes in the parcel. After follow-up investigation, Customs officers yesterday (February 28) arrested two men suspected to be in connection with the case in Kowloon Bay.

The arrested men, aged 27 and 33, have been jointly charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. They will appear at Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (March 2).

Also, a 47-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Sao Paulo, Brazil via Dubai, United Arab Emirates yesterday night. The man was found to be suspicious upon Customs clearance and was escorted to hospital for examination. The man discharged about 690 grams of suspected cocaine today. He was then arrested by Customs officers. Investigation is ongoing.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



Transcript of remarks by S for S after FCC meeting

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, at a media session at Central Government Offices, Tamar, after the Fight Crime Committee meeting this afternoon (March 1):

Reporter: How would the report regarding the National Party be drafted?

Secretary for Security: When the Chief Executive met the press to inform the public about the request of the Central People's Government for her to submit a report on the matter relating to the prohibition order regarding the Hong Kong National Party, she has indicated that the report would likely contain the whole process regarding how the prohibition order was issued and dealt with in accordance with the Societies Ordinance, the legal procedures, and also the fact involved in the matter. She has also indicated that she would prefer to make her report public subject to legal advice because it is likely the society concerned may institute some legal proceedings.

Reporter: I just want to ask the latest development of the Saudi sisters, as the permission for them to stay actually expired yesterday. When will they get an answer whether the permission for them to stay as tolerated overstayers will be renewed? Is it illegal for them to stay in Hong Kong as of this moment because they still have not received this permission? The second question is on the extradition proposal. Since Taiwan is unlikely to accept that proposal on the grounds said because it is "one China" premise, is that any point that defeats your purpose of putting forward this whole bill?

Secretary for Security: Your first question regarding a particular immigration case, it will be inappropriate for me to go into the case details. But it is the policy of the Hong Kong SAR Government that it will always act in accordance with the law. So in relation to whatever immigration case, the Immigration Department will act in accordance with the law, having regard to prevailing immigration policy.

In regard to the Security Bureau's proposal to amend the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance and the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance, we are aiming at plugging a loophole. To answer the question, first of all we have to ask ourselves: should we allow a person who has committed a serious crime to escape justice? The second question is: should we allow such a person to live amongst us, so as to pose a threat to citizens of Hong Kong? If the first answer is we should not allow a person who has committed a serious crime to escape justice, and if the second answer is we should also not allow a person who has committed a serious crime to live freely amongst us on a day-to-day basis, so as to threaten our safety and law and order, then we must plug the loophole. That is what the Security Bureau is doing.

The proposal is aiming at one single standard applicable to all places around the world, based on the case merits, without considering all other factors except the safeguards that have long been laid down in the present Fugitive Offenders Ordinance. It is important to note that since the occurrence of the (Taiwan homicide) case, we have already received a request for legal assistance and the handover of the suspect to Taiwan. We have received the request already. We aim to amend the law so that we are not forbidden to start discussing with jurisdictions with which we have no long term agreement. It is only to allow the Hong Kong Government to proceed, to talk people all over the world. So it is an amendment to the domestic Hong Kong law which will take away the restriction. We will be discussing with all places around the world if the amendment is passed by the LegCo (Legislative Council). And it will be done on the principle of mutual respect.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

[Lands Department's response on rehousing and ex-gratia allowance application matters of the Kwu Tung North and Fanling North New Development Area](#)

In response to recent remarks by a concern group that the Lands Department (LandsD) had set a deadline for applying for rehousing and ex-gratia allowances (EGAs) for the Kwu Tung North and Fanling North (KTN and FLN) New Development Area (NDA), a spokesperson for the LandsD made the following clarifications today (March 1):

The Government is seeking funding approval from the Legislative Council for related works of the KTN and FLN NDA. At present, land resumption and clearance have not commenced.

The LandsD issued letters to households affected by the KTN and FLN NDA on February 11, 2019, informing them of the procedures of applying for rehousing and EGAs. As the Government notes that the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA) will shortly commence the allocation work for public rental housing (PRH) estate units soon to be commissioned within the district, if households affected by the Advance Works and First Stage Works of the NDA hope to be considered for allocation to these new PRH units but have not submitted information to the LandsD for verifying their rehousing eligibility, the LandsD invited them to submit relevant documentary proof on

or before March 8, 2019. As for households affected by the Remaining Works of the NDA, the LandsD also issued letters to them in one go to invite their submission of voluntary applications for early departure from and surrendering of their squatter structures, as well as relevant documentary proof, on or before March 8, 2019. The aforementioned arrangements are made in response to the wish of affected households which hope to complete eligibility screening early with a view to moving into newly commissioned PRH units within the district.

The spokesperson said, "It must be stressed that households' eligibility of applying for rehousing and EGAs under the system will not be affected as a result of their failure to submit on or before March 8, 2019 the required documentary proof or voluntary applications for early departure from and surrendering of their squatter structures. In other words, this date is not the deadline for submission of applications/information. The LandsD will continue processing applications/information submitted after this date and endeavor to facilitate local rehousing of eligible households. Where submission of applications/information is delayed and does not match with the HKHA's allocation timetable of newly commissioned PRH units, the concerned households will still be allocated rehousing units so long as they meet the relevant rehousing eligibility criteria. In this regard, the HKHA will arrange for allocation to other PRH units within the same district as far as practicable."

If affected households of KTN and FLN have any enquiries about the compensation, allowances and rehousing related to the NDA, they can contact the Clearance (2) Office of the LandsD at 2664 5141. If necessary, households can also seek assistance from the Social Service Team engaged by the Government (Tel: 6601 1673 for KTN or 2503 0818 for FLN). The Social Service Team will refer their cases to relevant government departments for follow-up as appropriate.

CHP investigates two suspected food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 1) investigating two suspected food poisoning clusters affecting nine persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The first cluster involved two males and three females, aged 6 to 54, who developed abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and fever about 2 to 11 hours after having lunch at a restaurant in Yau Tsim Mong District on February 24.

Another cluster involved one male and three females, aged 35 to 68, who developed similar symptoms about 5 to 12 hours after having lunch at the same restaurant on February 25.

Seven of the affected persons sought medical advice. Among them, four required hospitalisation and three were discharged following treatment. The stool specimen collected from one patient tested positive for Salmonella upon laboratory testing. All patients are in a stable condition.

"We have alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to the incident and investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

To prevent food-borne diseases, members of the public are reminded to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times. When dining out:

- Patronise only reliable and licensed restaurants;
- Avoid eating raw seafood;
- Be a discerning consumer in choosing cold dishes, including sashimi, sushi and raw oysters, at a buffet;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hot pot or barbecue meal;
- Handle raw and cooked foods carefully and separate them completely during the cooking process;
- Use two sets of chopsticks and utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine and wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.