

# Speech by SCST at opening ceremony of 36th International Travel Expo and 17th MICE Travel Expo (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, at the opening ceremony of the 36th International Travel Expo and the 17th MICE Travel Expo today (August 18):

K S (Managing Director of TKS Exhibition Services Limited, Mr K S Tong), distinguished guests, consuls general, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning and a very warm welcome to everyone joining us today for the opening of the 36th International Travel Expo, or ITE in short, and the 17th MICE Travel Expo. It gives me great pleasure to be here in my new capacity as the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism of the HKSAR (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) Government.

ITE is certainly a veteran in the international travel arena. With a history of more than three decades, it has become a renowned home-grown travel trade event of Hong Kong. Together with the MICE Travel Expo, the twin shows have built a solid reputation for providing a well-established platform for the travel and MICE sectors to connect with and to expand their business contacts as well as showcase their latest and finest products. This year, under the theme of "Reconnect & Recovery", the twin shows have attracted over 100 exhibitors from around the globe, which is a testimony of the eagerness of the trade from all over the world to welcome visitors again.

Like the trade, the HKSAR Government is also sparing no effort in preparing for the return of visitors when circumstances permit. We start by going local via the Green Lifestyle Local Tour Incentive Scheme. This scheme creates job opportunities for practitioners while fostering the development of new itineraries to tap into the growing appetite for nature and wellness. We are also making preparations for launching a new Cultural and Heritage Sites Local Tour Incentive Scheme later this year to encourage the industry to develop more tourism products with cultural and heritage elements.

Our efforts to enhance our tourism offerings haven't stopped despite the pandemic. After the opening of M+ at the West Kowloon Cultural District in last November, we have recently welcomed another much-anticipated arts and cultural landmark, the Hong Kong Palace Museum. This collaborative project between the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority and the Palace Museum in Beijing promotes the study and appreciation of Chinese arts and culture as well as fosters dialogue between world civilisations. Not only does the opening of the Hong Kong Palace Museum signify an important milestone for Hong Kong to develop into a hub for arts and cultural exchanges between China and the rest of the world as outlined in the National 14th Five-Year Plan, it also provides a key platform for us to promote Chinese culture to "go

global".

Arts and culture aside, we are giving our world-class Hong Kong Wetland Park a facelift, and we have completed the upgrading of 10 hiking trails and are embarking on another 10 in the coming few years to keep on offering our visitors new eco-tourism experiences. Our two major theme parks are also keeping up their momentum in enhancing attractiveness. Under its multi-year expansion plan, Hong Kong Disneyland has been rolling out a series of new attractions including, the recently transformed Castle of Magical Dreams, a new night time spectacular show "Momentous", and a new Frozen-themed area is in the making. As regards Ocean Park, its Water World, which was opened in last September, is Asia's first all-weather, year-round water park offering enticing experiences with 27 indoor and outdoor attractions.

These are just some examples of Hong Kong's tourism offerings and there are more to come to the delight of our visitors. With our belief that arts and culture, creative industries, sports, and tourism can well complement and reinforce one another's development, I am leading the newly established Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau to foster synergy and accelerate Hong Kong's development in those areas through better policy integration and co-ordination.

Of course, it would not be possible for us to revive and sustain the tourism industry without quarantine-free travel. The HKSAR Government has been closely monitoring and assessing the pandemic situation and latest trends in order to formulate an anti-pandemic strategy that achieves the best outcome with the least cost. In the past few months, different measures have already been introduced to facilitate travellers' visits to Hong Kong while keeping the pandemic at bay, such as suspending the route-specific flight suspension mechanism, refining the health declaration system, and introducing options of self-paid transport services for inbound travellers to designated quarantine hotels, etc.

We are fully aware of the community's wish to see the resumption of quarantine-free travel and to welcome friends from near and far again. And we are equally aware of the difficult situation that the core tourism sector has been facing for more than two-and-a-half years. We will continue to follow targeted strategies and formulate measures with a view to protecting the safety and health of citizens while striving to expand opportunities for the tourism sector. To this end, we have adopted a relaxed "3+4" quarantine arrangement for inbound travellers since last week, under which the compulsory quarantine in designated quarantine hotels has been shortened from seven to three days, followed by medical surveillance for four days. At the same time, we have introduced a Red and Amber Code system to the Vaccine Pass to differentiate persons with higher risk of infection, which further demonstrates our targeted efforts in achieving the greatest anti-epidemic effect with the least economic impact.

In closing, I wish the twin expos another year of resounding success and all of you the best of health and business. Thank you.

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## **Labour Department to hold occupational health public talks**

The Labour Department (LD) will hold a public talk entitled "Occupational Health for Security Guards" on August 24 (Wednesday). The talk will introduce the causes and preventive measures of lower limb and back disorders commonly found among security guards. Tips on healthy living will also be provided, with demonstrations and practice of workplace exercises.

The talk will be given by the LD's occupational health nurse at 3.30pm in the Lecture Hall of the Hong Kong Space Museum, 10 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui.

The LD will hold another talk, entitled "Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work in a Hot Environment", on August 29 (Monday). The talk, designed for workers working in hot environments to raise their awareness of heat stroke prevention, will cover symptoms of heat stroke, its first aid treatment and preventive measures.

The talk will be given by the LD's occupational hygienist and occupational health nurse at 6.30pm in the Lecture Theatre of the Hong Kong Central Library, 66 Causeway Road, Causeway Bay.

Both talks will be given in Cantonese. Admission is free but pre-registration is required. Interested participants can register online ([www.oshsreg.gov.hk](http://www.oshsreg.gov.hk)). On-site registration is not available. Infection control measures taking into account the latest epidemic developments will be adopted at both venues. For enquiries, please call 2852 4040.

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## **Labour Department to hold seminar on productivity assessment for employees with disabilities**

The Labour Department will hold a seminar on productivity assessment for employees with disabilities under the Statutory Minimum Wage regime on September 16 (Friday) at 3.30pm at Function Room AC2, 4/F, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, 10 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui. Enrolment is now open.

Details of the productivity assessment mechanism for employees with disabilities under the Minimum Wage Ordinance will be introduced in the seminar. Employers, persons with disabilities and their family members as well as representatives from rehabilitation organisations are welcome to attend.

The seminar will be conducted in Cantonese with sign language interpretation service provided. Admission is free and seats will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. The enrolment deadline is September 9 (Friday). The enrolment form can be downloaded from the Labour Department's website ([www.labour.gov.hk](http://www.labour.gov.hk)). Infection control measures taking into account the latest epidemic situation will be adopted at the venue. For enquiries, please call 2852 3856.

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## **Government gazettes compulsory testing notice**

The Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 65 specified places during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of a number of cases testing positive, 56 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. Furthermore, since some sewage samples collected in Aberdeen and Fanling have tested positive, nine specified premises are included in the compulsory testing notice. The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. Mobile specimen collection stations have been set up by the Government in different districts to facilitate testing to be conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

Persons who have tested positive in the past three months (including positive cases tested either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests (RATs) that have been self-declared to the DH) do not need to undergo compulsory testing. For those who are subject to compulsory testing (save for those who have declared their positive RAT results as mentioned above), they must undergo nucleic acid tests in accordance with relevant compulsory testing notices and cannot use RATs to fulfil the requirement of such notices. In other words, a negative RAT result cannot be deemed as fulfilling the compulsory testing requirement. Furthermore, unless a person subject to compulsory testing has obtained a

medical certificate proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, the person cannot provide a deep throat saliva sample to fulfil the compulsory testing requirement.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s website via the following link: [www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn\\_20220817.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220817.pdf).

If any persons test positive under compulsory testing, such positive cases will be handled in the same manner as in those identified through other nucleic acid tests or self-declared through RATs. Their isolation arrangements (as well as the quarantine arrangements of their household members) are no different from other positive cases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing in accordance with a compulsory testing notice must go to any of the mobile specimen collection stations, community testing centres (CTCs) or recognised local medical testing institutions to undergo professional swab sampling in fulfilling the requirements for compulsory testing. Young children may continue to undergo the test using a stool specimen. For details on obtaining stool specimen bottles, please refer to the COVID-19 thematic website: [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/Stool\\_bottle\\_collection\\_points.pdf](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/Stool_bottle_collection_points.pdf).

If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above, the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or the post-super typhoon "extreme conditions" announcement by the Government is in force at any time during the period for undergoing the compulsory testing, the period for undergoing the compulsory testing will be extended for one day.

The Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide protection to those vaccinated to prevent serious complications and even death after infection. The Government appeals to persons who are not yet vaccinated to get vaccinated without delay. The Government is working towards the goal of boosting the vaccination rates of children, teenagers and the elderly so that they can be protected by the vaccines as early as possible. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the CHP of the DH has earlier updated the consensus interim recommendations that a three-dose series of Comirnaty vaccine (each dose is one-tenth of that for an adult) may be administered to children aged six months to under five years; and a three-dose series of CoronaVac vaccine (each dose of the same dosage as that for an adult) for children aged six months to less than three years. Besides, persons aged 50 and above may receive the fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine after at least three months from the third dose. Members of the public who are eligible should get the fourth dose as early as possible for better protection.

CTCs provide testing services for the public. Booking and walk-in services are available. Members of the public only need to provide simple personal information on the 24-hour booking system

([www.communitytest.gov.hk/en](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en)). The system shows the booking status of the centres for the coming two weeks to facilitate the public's planning and selection of a suitable testing centre and a time slot for testing. The testing centres will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. As of 6pm today (August 17), there was around 96 per cent availability for booking places for the coming two weeks. Members of the public may call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

The Government will reopen the mobile specimen collection stations at Hing Man Estate in Chai Wan and Wah Fu (II) Estate in Pok Fu Lam tomorrow (August 18). The service period of the mobile specimen collection station at Chuk Yuen North Estate in Wong Tai Sin will be extended to August 19 (Friday). Separately, ticketing machines have been installed in a number of service points for on-site ticket arrangement. Members of the public who have obtained a ticket can visit the CTC website ([www.communitytest.gov.hk/en](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en)) to check the real-time queueing ticket status. Booking service is also provided for some large-scale mobile specimen collection stations, and members of the public may use the 24-hour booking system ([www.communitytest.gov.hk/en](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en)) to reserve a suitable time slot for testing.

Other than persons subject to compulsory testing, all members of the public may conduct free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable). The Government will also continue to provide free nucleic acid testing service for eligible persons of targeted groups, visitors to public hospitals and residential care homes and all elderly people aged 60 or above at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations. The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations are stated in the Annex.

Outdoor mobile specimen collection stations will be closed if the Strong Wind Signal No. 3 or Red Rainstorm Warning Signal has been issued, while all mobile specimen collection stations together with all CTCs will be closed when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above or the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force. Any changes in the arrangements of testing service will be announced on site, and members of the public may also pay attention to the relevant press releases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

(a) For tests which require using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable)

at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html)) for testing;

2. To attend any of the CTCs (see the list at [www.communitytest.gov.hk/en](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en));

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list

at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List\\_of\\_recognised\\_laboratories RTPCR.pdf](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf)), and

the relevant sample must be taken through combined nasal and throat swabs; or  
4. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the stool sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

(b) For persons holding a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner proving that they are unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons

1. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from post offices, vending machines set up at MTR stations or designated general out-patient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times,

at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html));

2. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority; or

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results.

A Government spokesman cautioned that testing received at the Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the CTCs."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notifications containing the result of the test and the relevant medical certificate (if applicable) for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and the maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The fixed penalty for discharging the liability is \$10,000. The person may also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Any person in breach of the compulsory testing order would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman said, "The Government urges all individuals who are in

doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

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## Government's response to media enquiries on enhancement of anti-epidemic transportation

In response to media enquiries on further enhancement of anti-epidemic vehicle services to transport persons who have tested positive for COVID-19 from Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) to a designated community isolation facility (CIF), a Government spokesperson said the following today (August 17):

To comply with the Government's quarantine arrangements, the Fire Services Department (FSD) has been arranging anti-epidemic coaches with over 20 seats to provide transport services at fixed locations and times for inbound persons who have tested positive for COVID-19 at HKIA to a designated CIF since March 30 this year. These coaches operated every three hours from 9am to 0.00am.

Outside the above-mentioned hours, the Government also arranged other anti-epidemic vehicles to transport inbound persons who have tested positive for COVID-19 to a CIF. The FSD arranged an anti-epidemic vehicle to send three inbound persons who tested positive for COVID-19 from HKIA to a designated CIF in accordance with demand at about 4am this morning.

From August 1 to 16, the FSD's anti-epidemic coaches transported around 10 to 50 inbound persons who tested positive for COVID-19 from HKIA to a designated CIF each day.

To tie in with the latest quarantine arrangements of the Government, the FSD has enhanced the anti-epidemic coach services at HKIA starting from noon today to every 30 minutes from 6am to 1am and every hour from 1am to 6am daily.

The Task Group on Anti-epidemic Transportation led by the Transport and Logistics Bureau will continue to review the operation of the point-to-point transport services and liaise with relevant policy bureaux and departments so as to adjust the service in a timely manner in accordance with the actual situation and demand.