

# CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 1 422 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 2 801 cases by RATs verified as well as 205 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (August 5) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, August 5, the CHP was investigating 4 223 additional locally acquired cases tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, including 1 422 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests (586 confirmed cases, 658 asymptomatic cases and 178 cases with pending case status) and 2 801 cases tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) verified in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 205 additional imported cases were reported, including 178 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests (12 confirmed cases, 90 asymptomatic cases and 76 cases with pending case status) and 27 cases tested positive by RATs.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 829 251 and 547 115 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations on the cases. Please refer to the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for more information.

As of yesterday (August 4), among the specimens received by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch in the past seven days for verification testing of local cases, about 6.7 per cent and 6.6 per cent of them are related to sub-lineages BA.2.12.1 and BA.4/BA.5 (including suspected cases) under the Omicron mutant strain respectively.

In addition, as of 0.00am, August 5, a total of 9 318 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 238 and 77 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as three deaths reported from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 9 531 death cases that have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday, the total number of confirmed cases was 358 772, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 233 685, 31 and 235 163

respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that as the local situation of COVID-19 infection is still severe, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with social distancing measures, avoid going out and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings. This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

â€‹The spokesman reminded that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.

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## **Fraudulent phone calls purporting to be made by DH**

The Department of Health (DH) today (August 5) said that it has recently received a number of public enquiries about suspicious phone calls (from +852 2836 0077) purporting to be made through the DH's Client Relations Division hotline (2836 0077). The caller claimed to be a DH staff member and asked the called party for personal information.

A spokesman for the DH said, "We have not made the calls in question. If DH staff need to contact members of the public through the hotline, we will provide relevant information to verify the identity of both parties, but will not request the called party to provide sensitive personal information. The DH has reported the matter to the Police.

"We would like to remind members of the public to stay alert. They should not follow the caller's instructions if they receive suspected fraudulent calls. If they have any doubts, they should report the matter to the Police."

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## **Update on TMH missing patient incident**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier incident of a patient who left the hospital without notifying hospital staff, the spokesperson for Tuen Mun Hospital gave the following update today (August 5):

A 35-year-old female patient who had left the hospital without notifying hospital staff last night (August 4) was found in Tin Shui Wai this afternoon. The patient was brought back to Tin Shui Wai Hospital for a medical check-up. The patient is in stable condition.

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## **Commissioner of Rating and Valuation undergoing quarantine**

The Rating and Valuation Department today (August 5) said that the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation, Mr Kevin Siu, has been identified as a close contact after assessment conducted by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health as one of the family members in his household had tested positive for COVID-19. He is undergoing quarantine in accordance with the guidelines of the Centre for Health Protection.

Mr Siu has taken COVID-19 rapid antigen tests regularly with negative test results obtained. He also tested negative after conducting a COVID-19 rapid antigen test today.

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## **Update on supplies from Mainland**

The Task Force on Supplies from the Mainland led by the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB) has been working closely with the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Shenzhen Municipal People's Government to explore various means to stabilise the supply of goods from the Mainland to Hong Kong.

A spokesperson for the TLB said that the "Sea Express" water transportation service from the Mainland to Hong Kong has been fully launched and its capacity is rising to increase the supplies of fresh food, other daily necessities and manufacturing materials. The current supply of fresh food from the Mainland is stable.

The spokesperson said today (August 5) that Shenzhen operated 56 cargo vessel trips and transported around 5 320 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of cross-boundary supplies by water yesterday (August 4), equivalent to about 27 150 tonnes of goods, of which around 20 TEUs (about 100 tonnes) were fresh food and around 5 300 TEUs (about 27 050 tonnes) were non-fresh food, according to information from the Mainland authorities.

Since the launch of services from the three ports in Shenzhen since February 18 to yesterday, a total of around 767 170 TEUs of cross-boundary supplies have been transported, equivalent to about 3 711 290 tonnes of goods, of which around 2 200 TEUs (about 18 760 tonnes) were fresh food and around 764 970 TEUs (about 3 692 530 tonnes) were non-fresh food.

Meanwhile, to avoid a spillover of the epidemic, the Transport Department (TD) arranges for dedicated staff to conduct rapid nucleic acid tests, using nasopharyngeal swabs for specimen collection, for cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers at various land boundary control points. Only drivers with a negative result are allowed to enter the Mainland. A total of 3 059 rapid nucleic acid tests were conducted yesterday, among which seven cases that tested preliminarily positive or indeterminate were found. The TD has passed the cases to the Department of Health for follow-up.

The TLB will closely monitor the situation and co-operate with the Mainland authorities to facilitate and implement various measures to ensure both smooth cross-boundary land transport and a stable goods supply to Hong Kong, while reducing the risk of epidemic transmission in both the Mainland and Hong Kong.