

CHP investigates 5 237 confirmed and 3 443 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 10 208 cases pending status by nucleic acid tests as well as 10 493 cases tested positive by rapid antigen tests

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (March 11) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, March 11, the CHP was investigating 18 888 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus by nucleic acid tests (5 237 confirmed cases, 3 443 additional asymptomatic cases and 10 208 cases with pending case status) in the past 24 hours. Separately, 10 493 additional positive cases through rapid antigen tests (RAT) (7 616 symptomatic cases and 2 877 asymptomatic cases) were reported. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 594 511 and 52 289 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RAT respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The aforementioned newly reported cases consist of four imported cases and 18 884 locally acquired cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests, as well as 10 493 locally acquired cases tested positive by RAT. The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations on the cases.

In addition, as of 0.00am, March 11, a total of 3 231 deaths related to COVID-19 during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) was recorded, with 3 222 and nine deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 3 444 deaths related to COVID-19.

As at 4pm today, a total of 458 861 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests for the SARS-CoV-2 virus had been reported in the past 14 days (February 25 to March 10), including 458 729 locally acquired cases and 132 imported cases. During the same period, a total of 52 289 cases tested positive by RAT had been reported. A list of buildings related to the cases is available at the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

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 (March 10), the total number of confirmed cases was 245 987, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases, pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 116 539, 10 and 213 087 respectively.

Also, as the passenger flight (QR818) operated by Qatar Airways arriving in Hong Kong from Doha, Qatar, on March 9, had five passengers who tested

positive upon arrival, the DH thus invoked the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to prohibit the landing of passenger flights in Hong Kong from Doha operated by Qatar Airways from March 11 to 24.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that the local situation of COVID-19 infection became severe recently and there is a continuous increase in the number of cases involving mutant strains that carry higher transmissibility. With the higher transmissibility and risk of infection of the Omicron mutant strain, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with the social distancing measures, avoid going out and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings (particularly religious or cross-family activities and 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 are 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. Meanwhile, a person who gets COVID-19 and influenza at the same time may be more seriously ill and would have a higher risk of death. Influenza vaccination may reduce the likelihood of hospitalisation and the length of stay. In addition, seasonal influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons aged 6 months or above except those with known contraindications. Persons at higher risk of getting influenza and its complications, including the elderly and children, should receive seasonal influenza vaccination early. Please see details of the vaccination schemes on the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/17980.html).