

HKSAR Government Leverages support of Central Authorities and assumes main responsibility to curb epidemic

In response to President Xi Jinping's great concern about the fifth wave of the COVID-19 epidemic in Hong Kong and his sincere care for the people of the city as relayed, the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, on behalf of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and all the people of Hong Kong, expressed her heartfelt gratitude. She would continue to lead the HKSAR Government, leveraging the support of the Central Authorities with unwavering determination and uniting all sectors of the community, to make every effort to fight the epidemic as the top priority.

The Chief Executive said, "The Central Authorities have all along been providing their strongest support for the HKSAR. The HKSAR Government will, in accordance with the important instruction of President Xi Jinping, assume the main responsibility to stabilise the epidemic situation early as the overriding mission at present, and mobilise all available manpower and resources and adopt all necessary measures to safeguard the lives and health of Hong Kong people and the stability of society.

"Faced with the fifth wave of the epidemic, the HKSAR Government has, with its own continuous efforts, been striving to contain the virus by a multi-pronged approach and continuously enhance and adjust measures to boost its capability having regard to the epidemic situation. However, the rapid development of the disease has put Hong Kong under a considerably severe situation and outgrown the handling capacity of the HKSAR Government. At this critical juncture, it is necessary for us to leverage the advantages of 'One Country, Two Systems'; and to this end, I have submitted to the Central Authorities a report together with concrete requests for the timely assistance from the Central Authorities.

"Riding on the consensus and achievements from the second Mainland-Hong Kong thematic meeting on COVID-19 epidemic jointly hosted by the Chief Secretary for Administration of the HKSAR Government, Mr John Lee, and the Deputy Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, Mr Huang Liuquan, last Saturday, the work between both sides has commenced at full steam. The five areas of work encompass exchange of views among epidemiologists, enhancement of the capacity of nucleic acid testing, construction of community isolation and treatment facilities, ensuring of medical supplies and other supplies from the Mainland."

The Chief Executive stressed, "To cope with this wave of the epidemic, the HKSAR Government has mobilised all available manpower, with different bureaux and departments joining hands with healthcare workers, testing contractors, laboratories, the university team responsible for supporting sewage surveillance, district volunteers and so forth, to form a robust anti-

epidemic team. With the sincere care of the Central Authorities as well as the staunch support from the ministries and commissions of the Central Authorities and the Guangdong Provincial Government, we are determined to work as a team and spare no effort in fighting this epidemic in order for the people of Hong Kong to resume their normal lives early."