HKSARG enhances dissemination of anti-epidemic information through social media and online platforms

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (February 21) launched a Telegram channel, "Hong Kong Anti-epidemic Information Channel", to disseminate the Government's information on COVID-19 in a more direct and speedy way. In addition, the Government has, since early February, made use of various online platforms to centrally disseminate anti-epidemic information, including an Interactive Map Dashboard (Dashboard) and a thematic website, with a view to updating the public on the relevant information.

The "Hong Kong Anti-epidemic Information Channel" on Telegram broadcasts comprehensive information and the latest updates from the Government, including the number of novel coronavirus infection cases, the affected public services and other important anti-epidemic messages. Members of the public who have installed the Telegram app on their personal computers or mobile phones are welcome to join the Channel at t.me/HKFIGHTCOVID19 to keep themselves posted on the latest developments.

The HKSAR Government also launched an Interactive Map Dashboard on February 3, which was jointly developed and managed by the Development Bureau, Lands Department and a group of volunteers from the Smart City Consortium, with datasets contributed by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health, Hospital Authority, and relevant government bureaux and departments. Since its launch, the desktop and mobile versions of the Dashboard have attracted more than 7.5 million views.

The Dashboard has taken on a fresh look today (chp-dashboard.geodata.gov.hk/covid-19/en.html). Apart from improving the layout for more user-friendly navigation, the enhanced version has also built in more functions and housed more government information, including –

1. Upgrading the map features to facilitate the public to grasp the latest updates, such as enhancing the connection between the infection case and the places where the case subject has visited;

2. Adding the "Map Sensitive" function so that when users resize the map, the case list will automatically display the related cases in a particular region;

3. Adding the display function showing the infection time sequence so that the public will get a better understanding of the date and place relating to the infection cases;

4. Adjusting the displays on the Dashboard based on CHP's latest categorisation of the infection cases; and

5. Installing links to government news and videos.

     Furthermore, the Government has revamped the anti-epidemic thematic page on CHP's website for better dissemination of information. The revamped website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html) integrates news updates from related government bureaux and departments and serves as a one-stop platform for broadcasting the latest updates on COVID-19 as well as information which people are concerned about, such as figures relating to the epidemic, measures undertaken made by bureaux and departments, clarifications made, public health education information on the prevention of COVID-19, as well as practical information related to inbound travel, school arrangements, public transport, public services, etc.

     The Government will continue to abide by the principle of openness and transparency in handling the information dissemination work so that members of the public can be well-informed on the situation of the epidemic and get themselves prepared to fight the virus.