

Hong Kong residents stranded in India to take special flights to return home

A Government spokesman said today (June 17) that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has arranged two special flights to bring back Hong Kong residents stranded in India. The two flights are tentatively scheduled to depart from Bengaluru and Chennai for Hong Kong on June 18 and 20 respectively at the earliest.

The two special flights will carry Hong Kong residents in various provinces in the southeast part of India with special needs primarily, such as people with illness, pregnant women and children as well as family members travelling with them.

Over the past few days, the Immigration Department (ImmD) has individually contacted assistance seekers who meet the above circumstances to ascertain their wishes to take the flights and to obtain their personal particulars for applying for travel permission from the local governments. The two flights will carry a total of about 280 passengers who will pay for the cost of the air tickets.

Upon arrival in Hong Kong, the returnees from India will proceed to the Department of Health's Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at AsiaWorld-Expo for compulsory COVID-19 testing. After their deep throat saliva samples are collected, the returnees will be transferred to designated quarantine centres for a 14-day compulsory quarantine period.

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic situation, the Indian Government has suspended all international flight movements since late March. As at June 16, the ImmD had successfully contacted about 5 490 Hong Kong residents who are stranded in India. After receiving requests for assistance, the Security Bureau and the ImmD have been liaising with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of India to understand the local situation and take follow-up action, and to provide relevant information as well as appropriate suggestions and practicable assistance to the assistance seekers. The HKSAR Government has also been in close liaison with the Consulate General of India in Hong Kong, and has worked with a local airline for arranging flights to take the stranded Hong Kong residents home.ã€œã€œã€œ

The HKSAR Government has earlier arranged two flights to bring about 570 Hong Kong residents stranded in India back to Hong Kong from New Delhi and Mumbai on May 18 and June 4 respectively. Currently, there are still many Hong Kong residents stranded in different areas of India. The HKSAR Government will continue to assist the stranded residents to return to Hong Kong in an orderly manner in batches, taking into account the actual circumstances.