

ITB participates in “restriction-testing declaration” operation (with photos)

The Innovation and Technology Bureau (ITB) participated in a "restriction-testing declaration" (RTD) operation again, and completed the operation in the specified "restricted area" in Tung On House, Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau today (May 1). As part of the Government's anti-epidemic team, the ITB and its departments not only assume the responsibility of fighting against the virus with the aid of technology, but also mobilise manpower to serve the public in the frontline, and participate in "restriction-testing declaration" operations with a view to stabilising the epidemic.

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, yesterday (April 30) joined the RTD operation with some 140 colleagues from the ITB, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, the Innovation and Technology Commission and the Efficiency Office. Arrangements were made for residents to undergo testing in an orderly manner so as to identify infected persons promptly for follow up actions to cut the virus transmission chains in the community.

Staff members from various grades participated in the operation, including the Administrative Officer Grade, Executive Officer Grade, Analyst/Programmer Grade, Trade Officer Grade, Management Services Officer Grade, Official Languages Officer Grade, Computer Operator Grade, Data Processor Grade and officers from the Clerical and Secretarial Grades. Working with full commitment, they went door-to-door to arrange residents to undergo testing in batches, and distributed food packs, rapid antigen test kits, as well as anti-epidemic proprietary Chinese medicines donated by the Central People's Government to support the residents to fight against the epidemic while staying at home.

Mr Sit said, "Fighting the virus is the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government's most pressing mission at present. We join other bureaux and departments to mobilise all available manpower and resources for anti-epidemic work. We have also engaged our stakeholders to fight the epidemic, including local universities, start-ups, research institutes and the industry. With the aid of technology, efficiency in various aspects of anti-epidemic work can be enhanced.

"Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic in Hong Kong, the ITB and its departments have been putting technology to work to support our anti-epidemic work. We have implemented various schemes to promote the application of local technologies in preventing and controlling the epidemic. These schemes help unleash research and development (R&D) potential and promote commercialisation and application of R&D results in Hong Kong. A special call

for the Public Sector Trial Scheme has approved 63 projects with total funding of over \$102 million to provide funding support for trials of R&D outcomes that can help combat the epidemic in the community. The Distance Business Programme supports enterprises to continue their business and provide services during the epidemic through the adoption of information technology solutions, promoting the use of technology across different industries. More than 25 000 approved applications have proceeded to the implementation stage, involving a total funding of around \$1.7 billion. Among them, about 22 000 applications have completed the projects. The Innovation and Technology Commission has also consolidated a list of more than 300 anti-epidemic products and services developed by local tech companies based on the recommendations from our innovation and technology partner organisations, with categories such as diagnosis/detection of COVID-19 virus, and disinfection and air purification, to encourage government departments to fight the virus with the aid of technology.

"With the strong backing and unwavering support from the Central Government and the concerted efforts of the entire community, the epidemic in Hong Kong has been stabilised. We will remain confident and determined, and continue to press ahead with the development of suitable technology solutions to fully meet the latest anti-epidemic needs. By bringing the epidemic under control, Hong Kong will gradually return to normality, and the flow of people can be restored as soon as possible."

