

# Response to media enquiries on group gathering request

Regarding media enquiries on a request from an organisation for the Chief Secretary for Administration to permit group gatherings under section 5 of the Prevention and Control of Diseases (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) on May 30 and June 4, on which the organisation plans to organise a procession and a gathering respectively, a spokesman for the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office responded today (May 27) as follows:

The COVID-19 pandemic remains severe and the number of cases including mutant strains around the world is rising continuously. Although cases involving mutant strains have not yet caused an outbreak in the community, there is resurgence of the epidemic in a number of neighbouring regions. We should not let our guard down. It is essential for us to take all necessary measures to strengthen epidemic control by guarding against the importation of cases and the resurgence of domestic infections. As such, there is a need for the Government to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the community through the continued implementation of various social distancing measures. As the COVID-19 epidemic still subsists, to protect public health, we do not recommend the organisation of mass gatherings involving a large number of people with prolonged duration of contact, and where there would be difficulty in controlling the crowd size and ensuring adequate social distancing among participants.

On the basis of the information provided by the said organisation, the Government is unable to establish that the proposed organisation of the procession and the gathering would meet the conditions under section 5 of Cap. 599G.