

## SFST distributes masks to elderly and new-arrival families (with photos)

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, today (February 28) paid visits to elderly and new-arrival families in Central and Western District and Sham Shui Po District, during which he delivered anti-epidemic packs and surgical masks as well as explaining the Government's efforts in fighting the virus.

Accompanied by the Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Joseph Chan, Mr Lau first joined Fong Chung Social Service Centre Limited to visit the elderly in Central and Western District. He took the opportunity to give them anti-epidemic items including surgical masks and learned more about the impact of the epidemic on their daily lives.

Mr Lau then went to Sham Shui Po to visit new-arrival families in the district. Together with representatives of the New Home Association, Mr Lau distributed anti-epidemic packs and surgical masks, appealing to them to join the Government in fighting the virus including staying home as much as possible and reducing social activities.

Mr Lau said he understood that with the scarce global supply of surgical masks in the wake of the epidemic, members of the public have been facing difficulties in sourcing masks. The Government has decided to give the masks donated by various benefactors to non-governmental organisations for them to distribute to the needy. With the setting up of the \$30 billion Anti-epidemic Fund, the Government will continue to increase the overall supply of surgical masks in the territory by global sourcing and supporting local production, he emphasised.

Mr Lau added that Hong Kong's economy has been hard hit by the epidemic. In order to help Hong Kong people weather the storm, the Financial Secretary has just announced in his Budget Speech various assistance measures such as a cash payout, extra allowances, tax concessions, etc., to alleviate people's burden. The Government will spare no effort to enhance social welfare services to benefit the elderly, low-income families, the unemployed or underemployed, and underprivileged people.

