

June 11, 2021

The Editor  
Financial Times

Dear Editor,

Tabby Kinder's article "Hong Kong risks its global financial status over COVID isolation" (June 8) was factually incorrect and misrepresented Hong Kong's anti-epidemic efforts.

Public health is the paramount consideration for epidemic control in Hong Kong. Our anti-epidemic strategy adjusts border control and social distancing measures in tandem with the epidemic situation to reduce the risk of imported infections and transmission within the community, having regard to public health protection, economic impact on Hong Kong, and social acceptance. As a result, Hong Kong has one of the lowest incidences of, and deaths per capita from, COVID-19.

Taking into account enhanced anti-epidemic capabilities and the rollout of the vaccination programme, the Government has since April 2021 adopted a new direction to fight the pandemic by adjusting social distancing and border control measures under the "vaccine bubble" concept and taking a more targeted approach in response to the aspirations of various sectors of the community to resume normal lives as soon as possible.

Vaccination is the most effective measure to overcome the COVID-19 epidemic, to resume a normal way of life and to resume cross-boundary travel. The Government has been working at full steam since February this year to promote our vaccination programme. So far, more than 2.7 million doses of vaccines have been administered, of which 1.64 million were the first dose, accounting for over 24% of the population aged 16 or above.

To ensure that the economy and society can continue to function, certain exemptions from epidemic control measures including quarantine are given on exceptional grounds for essential personnel, subject to stringent conditions on testing, self-isolation and movement based on risk assessment. Such exemptions are given to those meeting the criteria regardless of the place of origin of their company. There is no preferential treatment for any company.

The Government will continue to place the health of our community as a top priority and to be open and transparent about our anti-epidemic measures and efforts.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Cheung Kin-chung  
Chief Secretary for Administration  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government