

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo meeting

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting this morning (May 21):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, you have been questioned if it's appropriate not to wait until after the House Committee have a conclusion on how to deal with the situation. Can you justify why are you taking the matter to the full Council at this timing? Is it weakening the legislative power of LegCo and is it appropriate for the Liaison Office to ask delegates to support the fugitive laws?

Chief Executive: First of all, let me reiterate the importance I attach to relationship between the Executive and the Legislature. This has been my guiding principle since I took office in July 2017, and I have been putting in practice what I preach by going more often to the Legislative Council to listen first-hand to views expressed by Members of the Legislative Council to address their concerns and to follow up on points they have raised with me. That work has been put on proper record because every time I try to respond by progress reports or replies to the Legislative Council.

The decision that we have made which was conveyed by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, yesterday to invoke Rules of Procedure 54(5) to consult the Chairman of House Committee in order to put the legislative amendments to the Legislative Council for resumption of second reading on June 12 is a very difficult decision, seen in the context of that commitment to enhance relationship between the Legislature and the Executive. This is not an act of disrespect of the Legislative Council. This is an act which we have simply no option in order to break the deadlock and the impasse that we have seen now over the scrutiny of this particular piece of legislation, and up till now I have not heard any suggestions from the non-pro-establishment members on how we could resolve this deadlock. Both camps in the Legislative Council, apart from taking part in these very confusing meetings, have also had some private session to try to resolve it, but apparently every act up till now is futile. So the Executive has taken a very responsible act to try to break this deadlock by making the decision that I have just mentioned. I would not say that this is a sort of confrontation with the Legislative Council. This is more, I would describe, a responsible and decisive act of the Executive.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (May 20) seized about 1.9 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$5.2 million and a duty potential of about \$3.6 million at the River Trade Terminal Cargo Examination Compound in Tuen Mun.

Customs officers inspected a 40-foot container declared to contain kitchenware arriving in Hong Kong from the Mainland. After inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes inside 208 cartons mix-loaded with 180 cartons of kitchenware inside the container.

Investigation is ongoing.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

Members of the public may report any suspected illicit cigarette activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



Lifesaving services suspended at Cafeteria Old Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (May 21) that due to an insufficient number of lifeguards on duty, the lifesaving services at Cafeteria Old Beach in Tuen Mun District have been suspended until further notice.

First aid services will be maintained at the beach.

Tenders invited for government property tenancy

The Government Property Agency is inviting tenders for a five-year tenancy of a government property at Shop No. 321, Ground Floor, Passenger Clearance Building, 33 Shun Fai Road, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Port, Lantau.

The premises should only be used for general retail and service purposes excluding the sale of cigarettes, cigars or other tobacco products.

The tender notice was uploaded today (May 21) to the Agency's website: www.gpa.gov.hk. Tender documents are available for collection at the Government Property Agency, 31/F, Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, during office hours (8.30am to 5.45pm from Mondays to Fridays). The documents can also be downloaded from the Agency's website.

Interested tenderers who wish to inspect the site should make prior appointment with the Government Property Agency by calling 2594 7697 on or before June 6 this year.

Tenderers must submit their tenders by placing them in the Government Logistics Department Tender Box situated on the Ground Floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, before noon on June 18 this year. Late tenders will not be accepted.

Red flags hoisted at several beaches

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (May 21) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Stanley Main Beach, Shek O Beach and Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; Tong Fuk Beach in Islands District; and Silverstrand Beach, Clear Water Bay First Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.