

Transcript of remarks by FS (with photo/video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at a media session after attending a radio programme this morning (March 9):

Reporter: Secretary, are you concerned that the extradition arrangement, if passed, would affect foreign investment? And also, can explaining more to these business leaders really help soothe their concerns regarding the lack of confidence in Mainland legal system? Second question, can Hong Kong...

Financial Secretary: Let me deal with the first one first. I have heard the concerns raised by the business community. I would like to make a couple of points. Firstly, the reason or the justification for the extradition must be an act that is considered to be criminal in both Hong Kong and the jurisdiction where this act has been committed. That is, it must be criminal in nature in both jurisdictions. Secondly, the court in Hong Kong will be the gatekeeper as there will be a court procedure in deciding whether the extradition is allowed. And there is full right of appeal for the individual concerned. And thirdly, the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, will try to explain further and more so as to remove any misunderstanding, and he is in the process of collating views and suggestions. These concerns surely will be brought to his attention. In taking the matter forward, he will give these concerns due consideration.

Reporter: Can Hong Kong really survive if the US cancels the Hong Kong Policy Act? Because Hong Kong might no longer be separate customs entity and our link ex-change system might be affected as well...

Financial Secretary: I don't think we should speculate too much at this stage. The report has not been published yet and the US also has significant business interest in Hong Kong. And for us in Hong Kong, we have over the past decades gone through a lot of different challenges. We are very resilient. We will be able to rise to any challenge.

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



Opening ceremony of Eastern District Cultural Square under Signature Project Scheme held

The opening ceremony of the Eastern District Cultural Square under the Signature Project Scheme (SPS) of Eastern District was held at Tam Kung Temple Road in Shau Kei Wan today (March 9).

To enhance district administration, the Government earmarked a provision of \$100 million for each District Council under the SPS for the implementation of signature projects upon its endorsement, so as to better address local needs. The Cultural Square is situated at the junction of Tam Kung Temple Road, Tung Hei Road and Oi Lai Street, and is adjacent to the Aldrich Bay Promenade. Equipped with a covered main stage and a small stage, the Cultural Square can accommodate over 600 spectators, and has more than 2 000 square metres of greening space. It links up with the Aldrich Bay Promenade, thereby expanding the leisure area of the promenade. It will also help revitalise the surrounding areas and enhance accessibility for the area near the Tam Kung Temple in Shau Kei Wan.

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam; the Acting Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Jack Chan; and other guests officiated at the plaque unveiling ceremony of the Cultural Square, marking its official opening and the commencement of a two-day event featuring a variety show and a carnival.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Mr Chan said that the SPS demonstrates the great importance that the Government attaches to district aspirations and provides support for district work. The Cultural Square will create a new harbourfront area for Eastern District and enhance the cultural atmosphere of the community, he said, adding that it will become an important venue for cultural performances and recreation in the district. Mr Chan also commended the contributions of the Eastern District Council (EDC), the Eastern District

Office, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Architectural Services Department and other departments concerned in implementing the project.

Other officiating guests included the Chairman of the EDC, Mr Wong Kin-pan; the Director of Home Affairs, Miss Janice Tse; the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Ms Michelle Li; the Director of Architectural Services, Mrs Sylvia Lam; the District Officer (Eastern), Mr Simon Chan; the Vice-Chairman of the EDC, Mr Chiu Chi-keung; the Chairman of the Steering Group on the Signature Project of Eastern District under the EDC, Mr Kung Pak-cheung; and the Vice-Chairman of the Steering Group on the Signature Project of Eastern District, Mr Leung Kwok-hung.

Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Sha Tin tomorrow

Police advise motorists that special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Sha Tin to facilitate the race meeting tomorrow (March 10).

The arrangements will come into effect two hours before the start of the first race and will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

Appropriate traffic signs will be put up and police will be on hand to guide motorists.

The Police also appeal to people going to Sha Tin Racecourse for the race meeting and to Happy Valley Racecourse for cross betting to make maximum use of public transport.

Parking spaces at the two racecourses are available only to holders of appropriate permits issued by Hong Kong Jockey Club and any vehicles illegally parked will be towed away.

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rate in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

Red flags hoisted at some 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 (March 9) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Stanley Main Beach and Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.