

## Remarks by CE at media session before ExCo (with video)

Following are the remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (June 17):

Reporter: Thank you. CE, good morning. My first question is, Hong Kong has banned the mobile game "Reversed Front" under the National Security Law. Are you concerned the measure could lead to accusations of restricting rights and freedom? And the second one is about the recent air flight. An Air India Boeing flight from Hong Kong to New Delhi returned to Hong Kong after reports of technical issues post-takeoff. Given recent frequent aviation incidents, will you consider enhancing inspections for all aircraft models, particularly Boeing planes? Thank you.

Chief Executive: Regarding your first question about the mobile application, according to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC), all citizens have the obligation to uphold national security. Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of the PRC; the residents of Hong Kong have that constitutional obligation. The mobile application in question was released under the guise of a game, with the aim of promoting secessionists' agendas of "Taiwan independence" and "Hong Kong independence". This endangers national security, and the Government will always take strict enforcement action in accordance with the law for all activities and acts endangering national security. The Secretary for Security and the Hong Kong Police have taken action in accordance with the Implementation Rules for Article 43 of the Hong Kong National Security Law, carrying out their responsibilities and duties to safeguard national security. They are doing the right thing.

I would like to reiterate the warning. First, any person or organisation who knowingly publishes the application or related content, including sharing or recommending the application to others via the Internet, may be liable under the relevant laws. Second, those who have downloaded the application may be regarded as being in possession of a publication that has a seditious intention. According to the relevant laws, this may be an offence. Third, any person who provides pecuniary or other financial assistance or property to the application developer, with the intent to provide funding to the relevant developer for the commission of secession or subversion, may also commit an offence.

It is coming to the five-year anniversary of the promulgation and implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law. If you look at the arrest figures for people who have been arrested for national security-related offences, then the total number is 332. If you look at the annual arrest figures of the Hong Kong Police for crimes in general, then roughly every year, there are about 30 000 people arrested. For five years, people arrested for offences under the national security-related laws amount to 330-odd, which means, on average, each year, about 66 people are arrested under the national security-related laws. Sixty-six out of 30 000 – I think it is a

percentage of 0.2. When we promulgated the Hong Kong National Security Law, we make it very clear that the law is aiming at only a small portion of people who endanger national security. This figure reinforces that clear message. On average, it is only 0.2 per cent of the total of 30 000 the Police arrested each year. It is really a very small portion. For the day-to-day activities carried out by normal citizens, they are very well protected to freely go about their daily activities, and that is thanks to the Hong Kong National Security Law, restoring stability, security and order for Hong Kong.

Hong Kong has been rated as the sixth safest city in the world (in 2023). We will work together to ensure that stability and security will continue. With that, we can fully focus on developing our economy and better improving the livelihood of our citizens.

As regards the accident, which took place in India, of course we feel grieved to see it happening with so many deaths. I send my condolences to those whose families suffered in this tragic accident. We pay attention to aircraft safety, and relevant departments in Hong Kong will pay serious attention to the development and investigation of this incident. We have a very good system to ensure that aircraft safety is of the highest standard in the world. We will continue to do that.

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