

Government condemns illegal and violent acts

Illegal protests took place in various districts across the territory for the third day in a row yesterday (November 13), seriously affecting the public. Rioters took the opportunity to commit such violent acts as arson, hurling petrol bombs and attacking other members of the public in different districts, jeopardizing public safety. A Government spokesman strongly condemns the illegal and violent acts of protesters and rioters.

In the past few days, protesters blocked roads in various districts, with nails being placed on roads and various objects put on railway tracks. Rioters even vandalised buses and public facilities as well as hurled petrol bombs at trains with passengers on board. Besides, masked rioters assembled in different places, threw objects from height, vandalised and set fires to shopping malls, the toll plaza of the Cross Harbor Tunnel and other places as well as attacked police officers with lethal weapons, burnt down a police vehicle and hurled multiple petrol bombs. Some rioters also wantonly attacked and injured other members of the public, with some still in critical condition at the moment.

The protestors and rioters' acts caused serious disruptions to traffic, bringing grave inconvenience to members of the public and hindering emergency services. The violent acts by the rioters are very dangerous and pose a serious threat to the safety of members of the public and police officers. The Government strongly condemns the protesters and rioters who disregarded law and order and deprived the freedom and rights of other members of the public.

With traffic interruptions, the Government is grateful to the civil servants, public service providers and people from all walks of life for standing fast at their posts, and to employers for showing compassion and adopting flexible work arrangements for affected employees.

HKSAR Government expresses concern over violent acts causing serious injury to FEHD outsourced service worker

An outsourced worker of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

(FEHD), who is a senior, was suspected to be hit in his head by hard objects hurled by masked rioters during his lunch break yesterday (November 13). He sustained serious injury and is in critical condition. A spokesman for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government is saddened by the incident and said the Government is in contact with family members of the worker through the service contractor and will provide all appropriate assistance to them. Meanwhile, the spokesman expresses outrage over the malicious acts of the rioters and emphasises that police will follow up the case thoroughly to bring offenders to justice.

Masked rioters conducted extremely dangerous and violent acts in various districts three days in a row, where they wantonly assaulted other members of the public. The acts are outrageous. Police will resolutely take law enforcement actions to restore public order. The HKSAR Government appeals to members of the public to stay calm and rational as well as to stay away from violence to safeguard personal safety.

LC Urgent Q: Emergency measures to allay public resentment

Following is an urgent question by the Hon Ip Kin-yuen under Rule 24(4) of the Rules of Procedure and a reply by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, in the Legislative Council today (November 13):

Question:

The situation in Hong Kong has continued to deteriorate recently. Not only a student, who had been injured during the course of the Police's dispersal operation, died eventually, but resistance activities also occurred in a number of districts in the past five consecutive days since the 8th of this month, and such confrontations have a tendency to spread across the whole territory. Apart from the continued law enforcement actions to be taken by the Police, whether the Government has formulated any emergency measures to allay public resentment, so as to avoid further deterioration of the situation?

Reply:

President,

Our reply to Hon Ip Kin-yuen's question is as follows:

In the past few days, rioters unlawfully assembled in different locations in Hong Kong, and unscrupulously attacked Police officers and members of the public holding opposite views. An innocent member of the

public was set on fire and is still in critical condition. The HKSAR Government strongly condemns such extremely cruel acts.

In the meantime, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government expresses great sorrow and regret over the unfortunate death of a man who fell from a carpark in Tseung Kwan O, and extends sincere condolences to his family, friends and schoolmates. The Police have pledged to conduct an in-depth investigation into the case, and submit to the coroners a report with the recommendation of holding a death inquest for the coroners' decision. If an inquest is to be held, all investigation data will be disclosed in open court.

Recently, radical netizens have initiated an "all-in strike" (i.e. labour strike, boycott of business, and class boycott) and other protests actions like blocking roads, disturbing transportation services and vandalising transport facilities, causing serious traffic disruption. The daily activities of going out, going to work and going to school of the general public have been significantly affected. Some masked rioters ignored the safety of others and threw bricks, wood planks, mattresses, bicycles, and even petrol bombs onto railway tracks. They set shopping malls on fire and threw items and bricks onto roads from atop so as to block the roads, causing injuries to passersby and damages to vehicles in motion. The throwing of petrol bombs, which is an outrageous act, has become common. Many areas in Hong Kong have been affected by these unlawful activities of the masked rioters, and the situation has persisted. These unlawful acts are outrageous, pre-meditated and planned.

Hong Kong is a city which respects the rule of law. The law applies to all places in Hong Kong and nowhere is above the law. Whenever unlawful activities occur, the Police are duty-bound to take enforcement actions according to the statute. Most of the incidents in recent days took place on the campuses of tertiary institutions. We urge schools to focus on education. The society should denounce and not condone violence, as violence only breeds more violence and undermines the rule of law. This would only cause greater harm. The outcome would be detrimental. The violent acts that were carried out in recent days were sheer violence and nothing else. The seriousness, extensiveness and danger of such acts have clearly crossed the line of any civilised society or reasonable person. They have seriously affected the freedom to the daily lives of the general public to go to work, go to school or simply go out. The violent acts are bringing serious threats to Hong Kong, and putting Hong Kong in an untenable position.

No one should violate the law even if they are discontented with the Government or the current state of social affairs. No one should resort to or rationalise violence. The HKSAR Government will give its best effort to stop violence as soon as possible. We are determined to stop violence and curb disorder, defend the rule of law, and restore social order promptly.

Destruction is easy but construction is not. Destruction and vandalism can be done in split seconds, but to mend social rifts and rebuild mutual trust to allow Hong Kong to move forward is not an easy matter. As a

responsible government, the HKSAR Government not only strives to stop violence and curb disorder, but is also tenacious to overcoming differences through dialogue. The Chief Executive announced on 4 September four actions to bring calm and order and as the starting point for Hong Kong to move on. Apart from formally withdrawing the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill, the HKSAR Government is fully committed to supporting the study of the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC), and will closely follow up on the recommendations of IPCC's reports. Furthermore, the Chief Executive and the political team will engage in in-depth dialogue with people of different political stances and background in the community, so as to get a better understanding of the deep-seated problems in society and find pragmatic solutions to those. Furthermore, as I mentioned in my reply to oral question number six just now, the Government would invite community leaders, professionals and academics to independently examine and review society's deep-seated problems and advise the Government on solutions. We are undertaking the necessary preparatory work, and will start the work on the independent review panel on deep-seated conflicts as soon as practicable after the situation has stabilised somewhat.

The social incidents in recent months have brought serious impacts on the local economy and livelihood. In this connection, since August this year, the Government has announced three rounds of helping measures for enterprises and the general public. These measures cost a total of over \$20 billion. Some of the measures aim at reducing the operational costs (such as reduction or waiver of license fees or rent) borne by and tax liabilities of small-and-medium enterprises, or providing assistance to them in terms of capital flow. Helping measures for the general public include increasing the percentage of tax relief applicable to salaries tax for the Year of Assessment 2018/19, providing one-off electricity charge subsidy to residential accounts, and providing targeted relief measures for industries affected most.

The spread of violence is severely detrimental to the lives of every member of the public, as well as our economy, daily operation and international image. Hong Kong can simply not sustain long-term destruction and confrontations. We appeal for the support of the general public to treasure Hong Kong, defend the rule of law and social order, and denounce violence. The Government will take strict enforcement actions against all unlawful and violent acts. We are confident, determined and capable to overcome the current challenges and mend social rift. The Government will bring Hong Kong out of the woods by a "three-pronged" approach. Firstly, we will stop violence and curb disorder as soon as possible. Secondly, we will proactively engage the public in dialogue. Thirdly, we will seriously tackle deep-seated social issues accumulated over time.

Rioters hurl petrol bombs at Tolo Highway

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

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

Since last night (November 12), rioters have been occupying No.2 Bridge of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. They have hurled objects, bricks and petrol bombs at Tolo Highway underneath, seriously paralysing traffic and threatening the safety of the public. Rioters even threatened to hurl petrol bombs at all vehicles passing by.

Police warn the rioters to stop all illegal acts. As Tolo Highway is congested, drivers should avoid travelling to Tolo Highway and stay tuned to the latest traffic arrangement.

Auction for Victoria Park Lunar New Year Fair stalls ends

The open auction for stalls at the 2020 Victoria Park Lunar New Year (LNY) Fair concluded today (November 13). The total revenue was \$1,537,077 compared with \$14,508,659 last year.

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department said that a total of 176 stalls at the Fair, including 173 for wet goods and three for fast food, were let out during the two-day open auction.

To round up the results of the auction for the wet goods stalls held yesterday (November 12) and today (November 13), the successful bids ranged from \$5,440 to \$23,500, which averaged out to \$6,555. The auction of wet goods stalls fetched a total of \$1,134,097, compared with \$5,378,608 last year.

The auctions for stalls of the Fa Hui Park (Sham Shui Po) and Kwun Tong Recreation Ground fairs will be held at the Theatre, Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre, 11 Clear Water Bay Road, Ngau Chi Wan, in Wong Tai Sin tomorrow (November 14) and on Friday (November 15) respectively. The auctions for stalls of the Morse Park (Wong Tai Sin) and Cheung Sha Wan Playground (Sham Shui Po) fairs will be held at the Assembly Hall, Lai Chi Kok Government Offices, 19 Lai Wan Road, Lai Chi Kok, Kowloon, on November 18 and 20 respectively. The auction sessions are scheduled from 9.30am to 12.30pm (AM

session) and 2pm until completion of the auction (PM session).

The auction for stalls of Tat Tung Road Garden LNY fair in Tung Chung will be held at Rooms 1403, 1404 and 1414, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, on November 22. The auction session is scheduled from 9.30am until completion of the auction.

The spokesman reminded the successful bidders to comply with all the stipulations and provisions as set out in the licence agreement. Otherwise, the department is entitled to terminate the agreement and the licensee shall immediately vacate the stall.