

Speech by SJ at Vision 2030 for Rule of Law International Symposium (English only) (with photo/video)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC, at the Vision 2030 for Rule of Law International Symposium today (May 26):

His Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Department of Justice (DoJ), I extend our gratitude to our distinguished guests and speakers, to those joining today's event in person and, with the aid of technology, overseas eminent speakers and participants that are able to join us virtually from all over the world.

I also extend a sincere thanks to all the co-organisers and supporting organisations, the Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council and the Asian Academy of International Law in particular for their support. This Symposium is one of the enhanced celebration events for the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, as well as the first part of a series of events of the DoJ to be followed by the Legal Conference on Basic Law tomorrow (May 27), and then the National Security Law Legal Forum on May 28.

Today's Symposium has been highly successful and thought provoking, providing a valuable opportunity to gather together local, Mainland, regional and international speakers for insightful exchanges on the proper understanding of the rule of law. I am delighted to note that we have over 700 registered participants from around 40 jurisdictions.

Vision 2030 for Rule of Law

The 17 goals under the 2030 agenda for sustainable development were adopted by all member states of the United Nations to address global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, peace and justice, etc. The 17 goals are interconnected with the rule of law being a pillar for its successful implementation.

In 2020, the DoJ launched a 10-year project entitled "Vision 2030 for Rule of Law". Its vision is underpinned by Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda and Target 16.3 in particular, which is to promote the rule of law at national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all. It is the DoJ's commitment to build and maintain a fair and rule-based society underpinned by the rule of law through collaboration with stakeholders towards sustainable development.

Rule of law is often quoted and referred to but as Yemi (Senior Partner of Strachan Partners, Mr Yemi Candide-Johnson) asked just now, we must know

what is its purpose, and sometimes we have to ask ourselves what is it that we want out of this universal value. In legal parlance, rule of law would be represented by principles such as observance of due process, equality before the law, access to justice, efficient and fair dispute resolution mechanism administered by an independent and impartial tribunal, etc. But stripped of the legalistic and scholarly terminologies or principles, may I venture to suggest that perhaps at its core, or at the very least, what we yearn for from the rule of law, is to ensure fairness and peaceful co-existence with mutual respect. This is so, I would venture to suggest, at national levels governing the relations between people and people and the government, and also at the international level, where the world order is at stake.

The rule of law remains the cornerstone of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region's success, both as an international financial centre and an international legal, deal-making and dispute resolution hub. According to the Worldwide Governance Indicators by the World Bank, Hong Kong's rule of law percentile ranking steadily increased in the past 25 years from 69.85 per cent in 1996 and since 2003 above 90 per cent. Commissioner Liu (Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the HKSAR, Mr Liu Guangyuan) has rightly pointed out in his opening speech today that "one country, two systems" has developed on the track of rule of law, and in return rule of law has fostered the successful implementation of "one country, two systems", with the importance of rule of law being a key to maintaining Hong Kong's prosperity and stability, improving our governance and enhancing our competitiveness. Hong Kong's future is also guaranteed by the strong backing of our Motherland and the unique advantages of "one country, two systems".

One crucial aspect for sustainable development envisaged under the 2030 Agenda is that the rule of law is fundamental to international peace and security and political stability, and strengthened rule-of-law-based society should be considered as an outcome of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.

Indeed, in the keynote speech by Judge Xue Hanqin (Judge of International Court of Justice), she started and ended her speech by referring to the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence initiated in 1954 by China, India and Burma (now Myanmar) declaring that they would develop their relations on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence. She reminded us of the wise words of Premier Zhou Enlai who said "if these principles are observed by all, countries of different social systems could live in peace."

The Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence are in line with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Articles 1 and 2 in particular. Article 2 lays down, inter alia, the principles of sovereign equality of states, peaceful settlement of international disputes and non-intervention of internal affairs of other states. In her recount of the development of the world order, Judge Xue also reminded us of the Bandung Conference where Asian and African states enunciated the Ten Principles of

Bandung which encompasses, amongst others, the essential elements of international relations including sovereign equality of states, territorial integrity, peaceful co-existence, multilateralism and mutual co-operation, stressing settlement of international disputes by peaceful means. This, she highlighted, was the first time that developing countries, collectively, made their voices heard in promoting a fairer and perhaps a less Euro-centric world order. The importance of this breakthrough cannot be overstated. The setting up of Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) and its work now to provide the perspectives from Asian and African states in the study and research on various topics on international law should make an important impact on its codification and progressive development that will reflect a genuine world order.

Strengthening universal peace is one of the important purposes of the United Nations as conveyed in the UN Charter. However, in order to maintain and safeguard peace and security throughout the world, the principle of sovereign equality must be genuinely observed. It calls for mutuality in respect, self-restraint, non-intervention. To put these principles into practice, international dialogue and diplomatic channels are vital. Whilst States remain the major and decisive players for the direction of international law development, two anomalies call for attention. Unilateral acts of major powers have the tendency to usurp the fine balance struck in international co-operation and multilateralism premised usually on equality and mutual respect. A tilt in the balance will not be conducive to a rule-based world order that aims for peaceful co-existence. Double standards in the application of international law is plainly impossible to justify. Put simply, it is just not fair.

As explained by the panellists this morning, it is evident that international law has strengthened the rule of law in international affairs and contributed to the maintenance of world peace and promotion of international co-operation. Importantly, international law is setting norms and rules that are reflected in national law and domestic practice. It is no longer just a matter that affects States and international relations, but it is, as Judge Xue pointed out, affecting our lives in all ways. We want to look at in the afternoon how the rule of law is practised at the national level in a diverse and inclusive global order.

For the panel discussions this afternoon, we have heard that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to the system of rule of law. In his opening speech this morning, Commissioner Liu rightly pointed out that different countries have developed different rule of law practices that fit their specific national conditions, creating a diverse legal civilisation, with there being no best model or standard version of rule of law. Our Chief Justice (Mr Andrew Cheung Kui-nung) has also pointed out in his speech during the Hong Kong Legal Week 2021 that a particular version of the rule of law which functions well in one jurisdiction may not necessarily be transplanted into another jurisdiction; further, due regard must be given to the unique circumstances and context of the particular jurisdiction concerned. Imposing one society's standard of rule of law on another would be contrary to the universal principle of inclusiveness, which is not conducive to the creation

of a sustainable international order. Professor Dr Surakiart (Chairman of the Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council and former Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, Professor Surakiart Sathirathai) also reiterated the point that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to the rule of law in his keynote speech. Instead, as he mentioned, understanding cultures is the key to success in shaping the rule of law, which leads to successful application and enforcement of law. This is shown by the example as illustrated in his speech on the late King of Thailand's successful initiative in taking into account cultural differences in curbing the level of illicit cultivation. Professor Dr Surakiart also shared his insightful views on the important role of the rule of law in the age of digital economy which needs to be fairly regulated so that it can assist in promoting, amongst others, the rule of law by bridging inter-generation gap and dialogue. To me, the most important take that I have from Professor Dr Surakiart's speech is that, unless there is a recognition and respect for different cultures and traditions across different jurisdictions, it will be difficult to achieve sustainable development for rule of law.

That said, notwithstanding different societal values and socio-political systems, there exists commonly shared values and basic fundamental elements of the rule of law, although the degree of the respect for such shared values may differ across jurisdictions as we hear from the sharing of Professor Hayakawa (Secretary General of Japan International Dispute Resolution Center, Professor Yoshihisa Hayakawa), Professor Tian (Head of the Center for National Index of Rule of Law of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Professor Tian He) and Professor Zhang (Professor of Law of Tsinghua University, Professor Zhang Yuejiao).

On the other hand, different jurisdictions and regions have unique and diverse cultural, geographical, socio-economic, socio-political and legal traditions which may colour upon the way of how they have been practising the rule of law. To take but a few examples, we hear from Professor Tian and Professor Zhang noting that one important characteristic of the rule of law practised in China is people-centric. Commissioner Liu observed that the rule of virtue is equally important "德者本也，财者末也。外本而内末，反其本也。" – virtue is the basis and the law is to supplement.

Indeed these features may actually tally with a number of Asian cultures, and it is common for example that Asian traditions of harmony have a preference to resolve disputes amicably through mediation or conciliation in contrast to litigious societies which stress on determining who is the winning party in a dispute.

The sharing from the Iranian Consul-General (Mr Alireza Esmaeil Zadeh) we hear how the foundation of the Iranian legal system and its rule of law is Sharia law-based and of course Sharia law as he explained is an expression of divine will. Yet, we hear how the common essence of rule of law principles, as we now describe, such as equality before the law, independent judiciary and supremacy of law, can also have strong roots in the Islamic legal traditions.

In Africa, we hear from Yemi about people generally sharing and being

more accustomed to the substantive customary law and practice, and therefore those are matters that all to be taken into account when looking at the practice of the rule of law.

Given the importance of rule of law for a society's success and sustainable development, to foster the progress and practice of the rule of law, as well as to improve public understanding and awareness of the rule of law, it is considered that there should be an objective mechanism to review and monitor progress and practice of rule of law which can facilitate further research and capacity building.

This is also the backdrop of the launch of the Vision 2030 initiative back in 2020. Alongside the launch of Vision 2030, the Task Force on Vision 2030 for Rule of Law was established, with membership comprising internationally renowned experts and academics, to advance the work for effective implementation of the initiatives under Vision 2030.

To summarise the discussions of the Task Force, the recommendations that have been made were the proposed indicators which may form the "common denominators" of the rule of law, should be used as a starting point for formulating an objective methodology to review the practice of the rule of law. The Task Force also observed that varying practices of rule of law in different regions and/or jurisdictions attributable to their unique cultures, socio-economic features and legal traditions, etc, should be integrated to gain a fair and objective overview of the "basic fundamentals" of the rule of law in a wide range of jurisdictions.

The Task Force also noted that it would be more meaningful for a rule of law review mechanism to be based on objective data and information rather than perception-based and subjective elements so as to generate useful and empirical evidence about the actual situation of the rule of law practices in different jurisdictions.

The importance of developing an objective review mechanism of rule of law for enhancing successful implementation of the rule of law has been supported by legal experts as we see in the panel discussions today.

With the guidance of the Task Force, the DoJ launched an objective rule of law database in November 2021, as one of the important projects under the Vision 2030 initiative. Looking forward, the methodology for the objective review mechanism would be devised. This would involve complex consideration of appropriate ways to convert data into appropriate "referencing points", as well as to consider how to reflect or evaluate the practice of the rule of law when culture, socio-economic, socio-political, legal traditions are to be taken into account.

The need to engage professional specialists in the fields of economics and social science, etc, to further research on the interplay between cultural factors and the practice of the rule of law is recognised. On this front, the DoJ has recently signed a framework arrangement for collaboration with the Chinese Institute of Hong Kong, which is authorised by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). In the earlier panel session this

afternoon, we have also benefited from the sharing of Professor Tian He, Head of the Center for National Index of Rule of Law of CASS, about the main factors underlining the rule of law in.

The invaluable advice and guidance of the Task Force members on how to promote the proper understanding and recognition of the rule of law at regional and international levels are captured in the Task Force Report, which marks a milestone of the Vision 2030 initiative. Looking ahead, the DoJ will take forward the insightful and pragmatic recommendations as set out in the Task Force Report.

I must once again thank the Task Force members for their dedicated work and invaluable inputs these two years. Now, I am delighted to announce that the Task Force Report is officially launched. An e-copy of the Report is available on the website of the Vision 2030 for Rule of Law, and a hard copy is available onsite the venue for all the guests and participants.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to conclude my remarks by echoing what Mr Camacho (Council Member of the Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council, Mr Jose Isidro (Lito) N Camacho) commented. To achieve sustainable development as envisaged in the 2030 Agenda, it has to be by collective work and collaboration, not to use a zero-sum game approach, but to adopt and use a win-win approach. I also totally agree with what Mr Camacho has pointed out, and that is to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, we need active participation from the business sectors. He has shared the needs of the business sectors, which are the stability of law, predictability of law, consultation and formulation of laws, transparency and equal and consistent interpretation and application of laws. I am sure the legal community and the governments would have heard and bear in mind these very important words so that we can all join hands in achieving the sustainable development of rule of law. And the DoJ looks forward to further engagement and collaboration with you all. Thank you very much.



Fatal incident at construction site at Chi Shin Street, Tseung Kwan O

The Director of Architectural Services, Ms Winnie Ho, was deeply saddened by the fatal incident happened today (May 26) at a construction site at Chi Shin Street, Tseung Kwan O. The Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) has requested the contractor to provide assistance to the deceased's family.

At about 2.45pm, a metal platform being demolished on the ground overturned on a 48-year-old worker, who was then sent to Tseung Kwan O Hospital and was later certified dead.

Ms Ho visited the construction site to learn more about the incident. She and the Project Director of Architectural Services later met the deceased's family at the hospital to express their deep condolences.

The ArchSD and other relevant departments have launched an investigation into the cause of the incident, while relevant works at the site have been suspended.

Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

The Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 46 specified places during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of a number of cases testing positive, 46 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. Mobile specimen collection stations have been set up by the Government in different districts to facilitate testing to be conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

Persons who have tested positive in the past three months (including

positive cases tested either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests (RATs) that have been self-declared to the DH) do not need to undergo compulsory testing. For those who are subject to compulsory testing (save for those who have declared their positive RAT results as mentioned above), they must undergo nucleic acid tests in accordance with relevant compulsory testing notices and cannot use RATs to fulfil the requirement of such notices. In other words, a negative RAT result cannot be deemed as fulfilling the compulsory testing requirement. Furthermore, unless a person subject to compulsory testing has obtained a medical certificate proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, the person cannot provide a deep throat saliva sample to fulfil the compulsory testing requirement.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s website via the following link: www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220526.pdf.

If any persons test positive under compulsory testing, such positive cases will be handled in the same manner as in those identified through other nucleic acid tests or self-declared through RATs. Their isolation arrangements (as well as the quarantine arrangements of their household members) are no different from other positive cases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing in accordance with a compulsory testing notice must go to any of the mobile specimen collection stations, community testing centres (CTCs) or recognised local medical testing institutions to undergo professional swab sampling in fulfilling the requirements for compulsory testing. Young children may continue to undergo the test using a stool specimen. For details on obtaining stool specimen bottles, please refer to the COVID-19 thematic website: www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/Stool_bottle_collection_points.pdf.

If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above, the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or the post-super typhoon "extreme conditions" announcement by the Government is in force at any time during the period for undergoing the compulsory testing, the period for undergoing the compulsory testing will be extended for one day.

The Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide protection to those vaccinated to prevent serious complications and even death after infection. The Government appeals to persons who are not yet vaccinated to get vaccinated without delay. The Government is working towards the goal of boosting the vaccination rates of children, teenagers and the elderly so that they can be protected by the vaccines as early as possible. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the CHP of the DH has earlier updated the consensus interim recommendations, and persons aged 60 or above who have taken three doses of vaccine are recommended to receive an additional dose (i.e. fourth dose) of either Comirnaty vaccine or CoronaVac vaccine at least three months after their last dose. Members of the public

who are eligible should get the fourth dose as early as possible for better protection.

CTCs provide testing services for the public. Booking and walk-in services are available. Members of the public only need to provide simple personal information on the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en). The system shows the booking status of the centres for the coming two weeks to facilitate the public's planning and selection of a suitable testing centre and a time slot for testing. The testing centres will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. As of 6pm today (May 26), there was around 97 per cent availability for booking places for the coming two weeks. Members of the public may call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

Ticketing machines have been installed in a number of service points for on-site ticket arrangement. Members of the public who have obtained a ticket can visit the CTC website (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to check the real-time queueing ticket status. Booking service is also provided for some large-scale mobile specimen collection stations, and members of the public may use the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to reserve a suitable time slot for testing.

Other than persons subject to compulsory testing, all members of the public may conduct free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable). The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations are stated in the Annex.

Outdoor mobile specimen collection stations will be closed if the Strong Wind Signal No. 3 or Red Rainstorm Warning Signal has been issued, while all mobile specimen collection stations together with all CTCs will be closed when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above or the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

(a) For tests which require using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable)

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html) for testing;

2. To attend any of the CTCs (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en);

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories_RTPCR.pdf), and the relevant sample must be taken through combined nasal and throat swabs; or

4. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the stool sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

(b) For persons holding a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner proving that they are unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons

1. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from post offices, vending machines set up at MTR stations or designated general out-patient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times, at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html);
2. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority; or
3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau cautioned that testing received at the Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the CTCs."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notifications containing the result of the test and the relevant medical certificate (if applicable) for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and the maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The fixed penalty for discharging the liability is \$10,000. The person may also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Any person in breach of the compulsory testing order would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman said, "The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

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In view of a number of cases testing positive, 46 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. Mobile specimen collection stations have been set up by the Government in different districts to facilitate testing to be conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

Persons who have tested positive in the past three months (including positive cases tested either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests (RATs) that have been self-declared to the DH) do not need to undergo compulsory testing. For those who are subject to compulsory testing (save for those who have declared their positive RAT results as mentioned above), they must undergo nucleic acid tests in accordance with relevant compulsory testing notices and cannot use RATs to fulfil the requirement of such notices. In other words, a negative RAT result cannot be deemed as fulfilling the compulsory testing requirement. Furthermore, unless a person subject to compulsory testing has obtained a medical certificate proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, the person cannot provide a deep throat saliva sample to fulfil the compulsory testing requirement.

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The spokesman said, "The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

Government reminds members of public commencement of Vaccine Pass third stage next Tuesday

The third stage of the Vaccine Pass will commence next Tuesday (May 31). The Government reminds members of the public who are not yet compliant with the requirement of the third stage of the Vaccine Pass to receive the respective dosage of vaccine before May 31. At the same time, other members of the public who are eligible to receive the third dose should receive the third dose as soon as possible in order to strengthen protection early. There is no need for them to wait until the six-month grace period under the Vaccine Pass expired.

After the commencement of the third stage of the Vaccine Pass, the following persons are compliant with the vaccination requirements to continue to use the Vaccine Pass:

(1) Ordinary persons: (a) Received three doses of vaccine; or

- (b) Within six months after having received the second dose of vaccine;
- (2) Recovered persons: (a) Received three or two doses of vaccine;
- (b) Within six months after recovery;
- (c) Within six months after having received the first dose of vaccine after recovery; or
- (d) Aged 12 to 17 and received one dose of Comirnaty vaccine;
- (3) Inbound travellers: Arrived in Hong Kong within six months and holding the Provisional Vaccine Pass; and
- (4) Persons who are verified to be unsuitable to receive vaccination by medical practitioners, and hold the COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Certificate.

According to the recommendations by the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health (DH), joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel, persons who are unsure if they had a previous COVID-19 infection or persons who do not have their recovery record in the DH's system may safely receive the next dose of vaccine no less than 28 days after recovery.

The current version of the vaccination record already includes the date of birth and the latest vaccination or recovery status of the vaccine recipient. Members of the public may download the latest version of vaccination record through the COVID-19 Electronic Vaccination and Testing Record System website (www.evt.gov.hk/portal/en/), the "eHealth" or "iAM Smart" mobile applications. The Government reminds members of the public (especially recovered persons who had received vaccination or adolescents aged 12 to 17) to use the latest version of vaccination record (with date of birth and recovery record included) or medical exemption certificate, and store their relevant QR codes with the latest version of "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application. The current versions of "LeaveHomeSafe" and "QR Code Verification Scanner" mobile applications will automatically check whether the QR code provided is compliant with the requirements in accordance with the conditions under the relevant stage of the Vaccine Pass.

If members of the public have questions regarding the installation or use of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application, such as storing and display of the Vaccine Pass, they may call the "LeaveHomeSafe" telephone hotline (2626 3066) for enquiry. The hotline operates from 7am to 9pm daily. Members of the public may also visit the [mobile support stations of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer set up at 25 MTR stations](#) to seek assistance from staff, or learn about the details of using the application through the thematic webpage of "LeaveHomeSafe" (www.leavehomesafe.gov.hk/en/).

In view of the commencement of the third stage of the Vaccine Pass on May 31, and the next round of social distancing measures coming into effect on June 2, relevant government departments will conduct inspections at relevant premises during the subsequent long holiday after the adaptation

period from 0.00am on May 31 to 0.00am on June 2, in order to determine whether specified premises comply with the relevant regulations under the Vaccine Pass, and whether relevant persons who enter or remain in those specified premises comply with the Vaccine Pass requirements.

"Vaccination is highly effective in preventing severe cases or deaths from COVID-19. The implementation of the Vaccine Pass arrangement aims to raise the vaccination rate, strengthen the immune barrier against the epidemic and allow Hong Kong people's way of life to continue to resume normalcy in an orderly manner. We strongly appeal to members of the public who have not been vaccinated, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a much higher fatality risk after COVID-19 infection, to get vaccinated with no delay for the sake of their health. Members of the public who are currently eligible for a third or fourth dose should also get the dose as soon as possible," a Government spokesman said.

Note 1: For the vaccination requirements under the third stage of the Vaccine Pass for different categories of persons, please refer to the Government's [press release issued on May 17](#) and the Vaccine Pass thematic website (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/vp_t1_ENG.pdf).

Note 2: Recovered persons refer to persons whose infection or recovery records had been declared and stored in the Government's system. For the arrangement of downloading the recovery record QR code, please refer to the Government's [press release issued on April 19](#) and the Vaccine Pass thematic website (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/vp_recovery_qr_ENG.pdf).

Note 3: For the declaration of non-local vaccination record or recovery record and the arrangement to obtain the Provisional Vaccine Pass for inbound travellers, please refer to the Government's [press releases issued on May 5](#) and [19](#) and the Vaccine Pass thematic website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/nonlocalvacc_ENG.pdf).

Note 4: For the arrangement to obtain the COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Certificate, please refer to the Government's [press release issued on January 27](#) and the COVID-19 vaccination thematic website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/programme).