

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo meeting (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam and the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (June 2):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, the US President Donald Trump said he was directing his administration to kick-start the process of eliminating special treatment for Hong Kong, and it would also impose sanctions on individuals seen as responsible for smothering Hong Kong's autonomy. Are you worried that this will have a serious impact on the city's status as an international financial centre, and would you urge the US administration not to do so? And secondly, the former Chief Justice Andrew Li said in an article today, saying that he thinks the national security law should fulfil a range of criteria to conform to the principles of Hong Kong's judicial system, for example, it shouldn't be retrospective, and trials should be conducted in Hong Kong openly, and overseas judges should be allowed to adjudicate those cases. Will you do your best to relay these views to the Central Government and make sure that these legal principles will be upheld in the national security law in the future? And thirdly, about the rise in the new local coronavirus cases, does it mean that it's very unlikely that the Government will relax some of the current social distancing measures, including the gathering ban when they expire after June 4? On the other hand, do you think it's sensible to keep restricting people's freedom of assembly for months when we are likely to see sporadic cases for a longer period of time? Thank you.

Chief Executive: Thank you very much. Three very substantive questions. First, I have mentioned in my opening remarks that there is simply no justification whatsoever for any government, any economy to impose sanctions on Hong Kong as a result of a very legitimate process of the Central Authorities taking this decision to enact laws for Hong Kong to better protect national security. For the time being, I have not seen or heard any details from the US administration. So I could not really comment on that. What I have done in our government press releases and just now is to point out, my stance is I point out to the American authorities, rather than using your term I "urge" them to do this and that. I respect the jurisdiction of every administration, my task and my stance is to point out to the American government and indeed to other governments, should that occasion arise, that they will be hurting their own interests in Hong Kong. And we have substantiated by giving you the trade figures which are always to the American favour in terms of the trade surplus they have been enjoying from this bilateral trade in goods with Hong Kong. I have pointed out to you that there are over 1 300 American companies in Hong Kong which have been treated in exactly the same way as a local company in accessing the Mainland market under the CEPA (the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership

Arrangement). I have pointed to you that we have been granting visa-free access to American passport holders even if we do not receive reciprocal treatment. I can share with you that as both the CS and now the CE, every time I met with the US Consul General or visiting senior officials from the US Administration, I said, 'Shouldn't there be some reciprocity in granting visa-free treatment to our passport holders?' and the answer was always 'No'. This is my position that I point out the facts and the figures so that they will do their own calculations.

As far as the comments made by the former Chief Justice, the Honourable Andrew Li, before commenting – but whether I should comment is another thing – on his remarks, I notice that – I have not read his article in full – but I notice that he actually used the same phrase that I appealed to the people of Hong Kong in my open letter. In Chinese, it's “ç0tè\$ff”. I hope people in Hong Kong will first understand why we have now arrived in this situation that the National People's Congress has to act in order to protect national security and also by doing so to protect Hong Kong. As far as the legal principles and the content of the law, since we do not have, I have not seen, any draft legislation yet, I really could not comment on the details except to highlight to you that there were five fundamental principles to be adopted by the National People's Congress Standing Committee in drafting the legislation. One is to firmly safeguard national security. Secondly is to better, the whole purpose is to better the system of “One Country, Two Systems”. So whatever in “One Country, Two Systems” that have been valued by Hong Kong, certainly they will be upheld. The third principle is to govern Hong Kong in strict accordance with the law. There should be no worry that there will be illegal acts by certain people in Hong Kong. And fourthly is to resist external interference in Hong Kong affairs. Finally, which is the most important point in my view and hence I have quoted it extensively in one of my press releases or statements, is to uphold the legal rights and freedoms of Hong Kong people. And I notice that in addition to these five basic principles, in a statement issued by HKMAO (the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office), I think it's on May 29, they said that the enactment will not change the high degree of autonomy and will have no impact on Hong Kong SAR's judicial independence, including that of final adjudication. I find these principles and clarifications very reassuring, but of course one has to wait for the draft legislation before you will be truly convinced that the law has complied with each and every of those principles.

As far as COVID-19, we are very worried – I am very worried – about this outbreak in community, not because of the number of nine confirmed patients, but also because this particular cluster reflects some characteristics which we might not have seen before. We have seen a lot of family contacts infections. In the workplace, we have seen a little bit of the workplace in a bar, a band and so on. But in the environment – living in the same building but not affected by the drainage system or the building's structures – is something that gets me, and also I believe the experts, very worried. They have to do a lot more investigation to trace the causes of these infections and to receive as quickly as possible the specimens back so that we have a better idea of the extent and the spread of the infections in the local community.

With that background and new development, I said that we will adopt a very cautious and prudent approach in dealing with the various measures that we have put in place. One is the 14-day mandatory quarantine imposed on arrivals from almost everywhere. If it is from Mainland, Macao, Taiwan, it's under Cap. 599C. If it is from foreign places, it's under Cap. 599E. Both regulations will expire later this month. The second batch of measures will be those trying to enhance social distancing through Cap. 599F in regard of catering and business premises, and Cap. 599G prohibiting group gatherings. I do not want to give a firm view yet because again, you know, this is Tuesday, we have an Exco meeting to follow but I can tell you that we will announce the decision very soon. It's not a matter of taking away people's freedoms. Actually public health is also part of national security. National security is not just about explosives and rifles. National security includes financial security, includes public health security. When it comes to matters like public security, people will accept, Hong Kong people willingly abide by some of the restrictions in order to protect themselves, their families and society at large.

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

[CE to visit Beijing](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, will visit Beijing tomorrow (June 3). Regarding the legislation to be enacted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress for establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to safeguard national security, the Central People's Government will listen to Mrs Lam's views. The Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC; the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; the Commissioner of Police, Mr Tang Ping-keung; and the Director of the Chief Executive's Office, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, will join the visit.

Mrs Lam will depart for Shenzhen this evening before going to Beijing tomorrow morning. She will return to Shenzhen in the evening on the same day, before coming back to Hong Kong in the morning of June 4. During her absence, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, will be the Acting Chief Executive.

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected counterfeit mobile phones and accessories and smashes two storehouses (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs seized a total of about 4 000 items of suspected counterfeit mobile phones and accessories with an estimated market value of about \$1.1 million in Kwai Chung and Tsim Sha Tsui on May 28.

Customs officers mounted a special anti-counterfeit operation at the devanning area of Container Port Road South, Kwai Chung, on that day. Through risk assessment and intelligence analysis, Customs officers inspected an inbound express cargo of a logistics company arriving in Hong Kong from the Mainland and seized about 500 items of suspected counterfeit mobile phones and accessories.

After follow-up investigation, Customs officers arrested a 35-year-old man and a 32-year-old woman suspected to be in connection with the case at a trading company in Tsim Sha Tsui on the same day. Two counterfeit mobile phones and accessories storehouses of the trading company were also smashed. A further seizure of about 3 500 items of suspected counterfeit mobile phones and accessories was made.

Customs believes that the company involved was targeting overseas customers to provide them with mobile phone repair services using counterfeit parts and to sell them counterfeit mobile phones and accessories.

The arrested persons were released on bail pending further enquiries. Investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to strengthen co-operation with the Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies and take stringent enforcement actions against cross-boundary counterfeit goods activities.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale any goods with a forged trademark commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

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



[Red flag hoisted at Golden Beach](#)

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 (June 2) that due to the sight of a one-metre-long large fish, the red flag has now been hoisted at Golden Beach in Tuen Mun District for the sake of safety. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

[Labour Department highly concerned about fatal work accident that happened today](#)

The Labour Department (LD) is highly concerned about a fatal work accident that happened at a recycling yard in Yuen Long this morning (June 1), in which a male worker fell from height while assisting in unloading metal scraps. He was certified dead later in the hospital. The LD is saddened by the death of the worker and expresses its deepest sympathies to the victim's family.

The LD's spokesman said, "We commenced an immediate on-site investigation as soon as we were notified of the accident and issued suspension notices to the employer / occupier concerned, suspending the work concerned. The contractors cannot resume the work process until the LD is satisfied that measures to abate the relevant risk have been taken."

The spokesman added, "We will complete investigation as soon as possible to identify the cause of the accident, ascertain the liability of the duty holders and recommend improvement measures. We will take actions pursuant to the law if there is any violation of the work safety legislation."

The general duty provisions of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance require employers to provide safe working environments, plant and safe systems of work for their employees. Those who contravene the above provisions are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for six months.

The general duty provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance require occupiers of premises/employers to provide safe means of access and egress and safe working environments, plant and systems of work for the employees. Those who contravene the above provisions are liable to a fine of \$200,000 and imprisonment for six months.

In regard to today's accident, the LD will issue a Work Safety Alert through its website and email, giving a brief account of the accident concerned to duty holders, workers' unions, professional bodies of safety practitioners and others, reminding the industry of the importance of following safety precautionary measures to prevent a recurrence of similar accidents.

The LD will also remind the employer concerned of the liability for employees' compensation under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, assist family members of the deceased to claim employees' compensation and closely follow up on the case. For those with financial difficulties, the LD will assist them to apply for appropriate emergency funds. Subject to the needs and wishes of family members of the deceased, the LD will also liaise with the Social Welfare Department for financial or other assistance.

For the sake of securing the safety and health of employees at work, the LD appeals to employers to provide plant and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health. Employees should co-operate with their employers, adopt all safety measures and use personal protective equipment provided properly to avoid endangering their own work safety and that of other workers.