

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

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (June 20):

Reporter: Good morning, Mr Chief Executive, some English questions. The first question we'd like to ask about, how would you personally respond to allegations by lawmaker Cheung Yu-yan that it was you who gave the idea to move a private member bill to overhaul the governing structure of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and authorities would perhaps waive a part of the cost? Would the Government consider waiving the cost for Cheung now to move the private member bill? We'd also like to ask you a little bit about the meeting of United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken and also Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday. How would you interpret this in terms of Hong Kong? Would you see this perhaps as the easing of Sino-US relations, and potentially a chance for you to be invited to personally attend APEC in November? Thank you.

Chief Executive: A private member's bill and its procedure is governed by the Basic Law and also LegCo (Legislative Council) regulations and rules. Any LegCo member who proposes a bill will have to act in accordance with all these procedures and rules. The Government has given its permission for the bill to proceed in accordance with the laid-down procedures. It will go into the LegCo debate process and should be dealt with in accordance with the procedures strictly. All these things are already laid down with very clear guidelines. And things should proceed in that way. And I should have no more comment other than wishing that LegCo will go ahead with dealing with the matter in accordance with such rules and procedures.

As regards China-US relationship, this is a state matter and is being handled by state leaders. I have noted that in the statements made by our President Xi Jinping, mutual respect is emphasised and that a constructive China-US relationship is to the benefit of the world, to the benefit of both countries, and to the benefit of peoples of both countries. Hong Kong, as a Special Administrative Region, enjoys special status under the Basic Law. We are an international city. We are connected to the world and is the gateway to the Mainland cities. We will discharge that function no matter what, because that is what the Basic Law requires us to do. So I hope there will be a positive development in the relationship between our country and the US. But in this process I will be, of course, ensuring that all the advantages and opportunities that Hong Kong faces and enjoys will be capitalised fully. And I wish every one of us in Hong Kong will do the same as when we go out to different parts of the world to tell good Hong Kong stories, to create extra opportunities for our economic development and growth, and bring all opportunities to reality. This is something I and my government team will work hard to do.

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