

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

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam; the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung; the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; and the Commissioner of Police, Mr Lo Wai-chung, at a media session today (July 2):

Reporter: (inaudible)

Chief Executive: Let me just repeat very briefly what I have said in Cantonese. On July 1, that is the 22nd anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, we have seen two entirely different public scenes. One is a regular march on July 1. Regardless of the number of participants in the march, the march was peaceful and generally orderly, and this fully reflects the inclusiveness of Hong Kong society and the core values we attach to peace and order. The second scene that we have seen, which really saddens a lot of people and shocks a lot of people, is the extreme use of violence and vandalism by protesters who stormed into the Legislative Council (LegCo) building over a period of time. This is something that we should seriously condemn because nothing is more important than the rule of law in Hong Kong. I hope community at large will agree with us that with these violent acts that we have seen, it is right for us to condemn it and hope society will return to normal as soon as possible.

Reporter: Mr Lo, Police Commissioner, can you tell us why there were no police officers inside LegCo building? What kind of games is the police playing? Are you setting a trap on protesters? And Mrs Lam, sorry, I have a second question for you. Do you feel that personally you are responsible for the violence tonight because of your lack of positive response to the protesters' demands? Thank you.

Commissioner of Police: Let me answer first, I totally disagree with what this gentleman has just said. We had officers inside the LegCo defending LegCo for nearly eight hours. During the period, we had been under siege of the protestors. They kept on using violent tactics to try to intrude into the LegCo. It was until nine o'clock at night time, several incidents happened that made us to do a temporary retreat.

First of all, there were many protestors outside the LegCo main entrance and they were starting using violent tactics to charge the inner door of the LegCo.

Secondly, due to the local environment, we were unable to use some of the force that we could use in open ground.

Thirdly, we found that there were some protestors tempering with the electricity boxes, and we found that some of the lights had gone out. And in

fear of a total dark out that some protestors turned off the lights, I'm afraid there will be people stepping people, or there will be wrong move on either side, both the Police and the protestors.

And lastly, but not the least, during the charging they threw in some white smokes. As you know there was already a toxic powder attack on my officers in the afternoon. So without knowing whether this was another toxic powder attack, we had no other choice but to temporarily retreat from the LegCo.

Before we retreated, we had already asked the LegCo security to appeal to all working staff within the LegCo to leave due to the incident. And by 9pm, we had been told that all working staff had left. That meant we were sure that no other civilians were within the building, so my officers had no choice but to temporarily retreat, to do a regrouping and to do some redeployment to take back LegCo later on.

Chief Executive: It is not true to say that the Government has not responded. We have not responded to every demand asked because of good reasons. First of all, if the cause of the social tensions that we have seen is a bill to amend the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance, on June 15 I have announced the suspension of the bill. Subsequently we have explained and elaborated that by suspending the bill at this point in time with no timetable and no plan to resume the debate of the bill in the Legislative Council, the bill will expire, or the bill will die, in July 2020 when the current LegCo term expires. That is a very positive response to the demands that we have heard.

As for some of the other demands, let me come back to this very important principle of the rule of law. To demand the Government, without any investigation and checking with the law about whether offences have been made, that we should release everybody arrested, we should not take any follow-up action against some of the violent acts we have seen or even to grant an amnesty to all those involved in these protests, all these will not be in accordance with the rule of law. The rule of law is exactly what I have been talking tonight. I hope we all agree that this is something of paramount importance to Hong Kong and will continue to guide the Government's reactions and responses to social issues and to demands and aspirations of our people.

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

[Flag-raising ceremony suspended](#)

Owing to the maintenance works on the flag poles and the podium at the Golden Bauhinia Square, Wan Chai, the flag-raising ceremony scheduled at 8am today (July 2) will be suspended.

Special announcement by Education Bureau

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately and repeat it at suitable intervals:

Here is an Education Bureau special announcement concerning schools:

Since students' attendance of school may be affected by abnormal traffic conditions in the Wan Chai and Central and Western districts today (July 2), the Education Bureau suggests that schools adopt contingency measures under school-based mechanisms and exercise flexibility when handling individual students' lateness or absence.

The bureau calls on schools to make suitable arrangements, take proper care of students on campus, maintain communication with parents and, when class is dismissed, allow students to return home only under safe conditions.

Statement by ExCo Non-official Members

The following is issued on behalf of the Executive Council Secretariat:

The Non-official Members of the Executive Council (ExCo) today (July 1) issued the following statement against the violent storming of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Complex.

Hong Kong is a society that respects the rule of law, and has no tolerance for violence. The ExCo Non-official Members strongly condemn protesters who violently stormed the LegCo Complex. Their ruthless and destructive behavior amount to a complete disregard of the law and has seriously undermined Hong Kong's fine tradition of the rule of law.

In the face of the protesters' violent acts, the ExCo Non-official Members render their support for the Police in taking the offenders to task and bringing them to justice to safeguard public order.

FSD responds to media enquiries

The Fire Services Department (FSD) received the report of gas attack at an entrance of the Legislative Council Complex at 3.34pm today (July 1), with policemen felt unwell after inhaling of smoke. The FSD deployed five fire appliances and three ambulances to the scene. Two policemen were sent to Queen Mary Hospital for treatment.

As white powder was found at the scene, the FSD deployed the Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Team to handle the incident. The HazMat Team detected that the white powder was p-phenylenediamine (dangerous goods in category 4).

P-phenylenediamine is a poisonous substance. After a long exposure, it may cause itchy eyes, skin redness and swelling, and shortness of breath. Inhalation of large amounts of the substance may also cause serious skin and respiratory tract burns.