

S for S speaks on June 4 meetings and freezing of Jimmy Lai's property

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, at a media session after attending the meeting of the Legislative Council this afternoon (May 27):

Reporter: Secretary, Macau officials have banned a June 4 commemoration because they said slogans like "end one-party rule" will constitute instigating subversion. Is that the same reason why Hong Kong is banning a June 4 vigil? Second question, according to a report, you have sent letters to bankers, warning that they would face jail or fines for any dealings with Jimmy Lai's accounts. Why would they face such punishment? Are they falling afoul of the national security law or other laws? Would this practice cause harm to Hong Kong's reputation as a financial centre and cause an exodus of banking sector representatives?

Secretary for Security: The Commissioner of Police deals with the notice of public meeting and public gathering in accordance with the Public Order Ordinance of Hong Kong. He is the man to exercise the power. In connection with the May 30 and the June 4 public gatherings, the Commissioner of Police takes considerations of factors that are prevailing. That is our Hong Kong system and our decision is made in accordance with the Hong Kong law. As regards my written notice to companies and institutions regarding property which is offence-related property under the national security law, I am exercising the power because Lai has been charged with two offences of collusion with other country or external forces to endanger national security. It is my duty to specify in my notice to the relevant parties what will be the consequences if they fail to comply with my direction. The purpose of my notice is targeted at the offence-related property in relation to offences endangering national security. Normal businesses have nothing to do with any acts that may endanger national security. So we should not associate the two matters in any way. Normal businessmen will go about their duties and have nothing to do with endangering national security, and we should not associate the two matters.

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