

# Transcript of remarks by CE at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session this afternoon (February 8):

Reporter: Alfred Sit, the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, earlier said that the Government has no plans to make real-name registration a must for the "LeaveHomeSafe" app. Does the "vaccine pass" scheme effectively make real-name registration for the app compulsory now? And secondly, regarding the ban on private gatherings among different families, did you take into account the policy's impact on people's normal lives and mental health? And how can authorities enforce the rule? And thirdly, some of the entrances to the housing estates are inside the shopping malls. How can unvaccinated people return to their homes under the "vaccine pass" plan and will there be any exemptions for those who might not be physically fit for vaccination? And lastly, you talked about the need for Hong Kong to buy time to ensure the vaccination rate is high enough, earlier. Does the Government have a target vaccination rate and is there a point at which the Government may consider changing its "dynamic zero" COVID strategy? Thank you.

Chief Executive: There are a few questions. First of all, the new edition of the "LeaveHomeSafe", which also contains the person's vaccination record, will provide much better tracing capability, because on the vaccine record we have far more personal data than on the "LeaveHomeSafe", which does not require the individual to provide personal data. So once we introduce a "vaccine pass" we will have the record of the individual who goes into this venue in terms of the personal data which will help the tracing. That's why I noticed that one of the LegCo (Legislative Council) Members has described this move as "killing two birds with one stone". That's true, I think.

Issues about how we are going to apply and enforce the new regulation on prohibiting gatherings of more than two households, say in a private place, you will have to ask the Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health) later on. But I hope you realise, I hope we all realise that the time has come for Hong Kong to take some tough measures. And every measure that we now introduce has been undertaken in other jurisdictions, including some places and countries which are very proud of their human rights, their democracy and so on. They are doing all these sorts of things because this is about life. Public health prevails over, very often, individual freedoms. But we will not make any individual in Hong Kong simply could not live. There will be exemptions, there will be compassionate treatment for this and that. But I could not comment on individual circumstances.

About a target, I have already set a target some time ago: I said if we could do the first dose around 20,000 every day, then by February 24, when we introduce a "vaccine pass", we should be very close to 90 per cent, because every 20,000 people taking a first dose on a daily basis will add 0.3 per

cent to the vaccination rate. We are now 80.3, 80.4, and we still have two, three weeks to go, so let's set at least a common target that let us reach 90 per cent when the "vaccine pass" becomes a common requirement in Hong Kong and then we move on to beyond 90 per cent, and within the 90 per cent we need to do much better for our elderly population, which is still now just below 50 per cent for those aged 70 and above. Until all those things happen, we will continue to adhere to the current strategy of trying to contain the spread of the virus, or what we call maintaining this "dynamic zero" regime. When vaccination rates increase, when Omicron disappears and other things happen, then, of course, we will continue to revisit our strategy, but nothing will change our commitment to safeguard the lives and the safety of the people of Hong Kong. Thank you.

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