

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session after voting (with photos/videos)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session after casting her vote for the 2021 Legislative Council General Election at Raimondi College this morning (December 19):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, do you expect there will be a high voter turnout today?

Chief Executive: I don't have any particular expectation and I would say that the Government has not set any target for the voter turnout rate, not for this election, not for previous elections, because there is a combination of factors that will affect the voter turnout rate in any election. But I do have set very clear targets for this General Election of the Legislative Council (LegCo). One is to ensure "patriots administering Hong Kong", and I think that objective has been met through the design of the Candidate Eligibility Review Committee. All of the 153 candidates could meet this requirement and you can see that they actually come from a very diverse background with very different opinions on a range of issues. The second target that I have set is, as usual, that public elections in Hong Kong have to fulfil the requirements of being fair, open, competitive and honest. On this occasion, I have set additional targets that it has to be very efficient, it has to be as people-oriented as possible, so we have introduced some improvement measures to the electoral arrangements. And finally, perhaps unlike previous elections, because this is the first major LegCo Election after improvements to the electoral system, I and my colleagues have been going all out to explain the basis, the rationale and the merits of this electoral system. I think these three objectives will guide how we see this particular election, rather than the voter turnout rate.

Reporter: Mrs Lam, just now you said that your Government has not set any target on voter turnout but has the Central People's Government set any target on voter turnout? And if it went beneath their expectation, would anyone be held politically liable? The second question is, did you just say that the District Council Election back in 2019, where every voter has one vote, is undemocratic in the last question?

Chief Executive: First of all, I am not aware of any targets on the voter turnout rate being set by the Central Government and I doubted very much that any responsible institution will set any target for voter turnout rate. This has not happened previously and is not happening in this particular election.

But of course, as a Chief Executive, I am responsible and accountable for the conduct of the election in a fair, open and honest manner. On top of that, in this particular election, I have set targets that we should be as

efficient as possible, for example, in trying to announce the election results as early as possible; and trying to accommodate the interest of voters, for example, elderly voters and voters who need some special help need not be waiting in the queue for too long. These are the targets that I have set, and as a result of that, being the Chief Executive, I am responsible and accountable for the delivery of these targets to the people of Hong Kong, but not on the voter turnout rate.

You have generalised what I have said. I said in 2019 during the District Council Election, we were in a situation where people were very fearful of things happening around in society, there were still a lot of riots, petrol bombs, intimidation and illegal activities happening. This is not the environment that would produce what we called, or what we regarded as democracy, that is the interest of the people. So I hope you understand better what I've meant.

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

