

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

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (May 12):

Reporter: What do you think is the problem with the Liberal Studies curriculum right now and are you planning to substantially revamp or scrap it completely? And also, there's a media report saying that the Government is planning to resume the Second Reading of the National Anthem Bill on May 27, could you confirm that? And does that mean the Government has already liaised with the Chairwoman of this House Committee Starry Lee to ensure the Committee will pass the Bill to the main Council by that day?

Chief Executive: I really have nothing more to add on the future arrangement for the subject of Liberal Studies. This is only one of the areas that the Government has identified that warrant a review at the beginning of our term. We started off by creating eight task forces to look at various aspects of Hong Kong's education system, and one of it is to look at the curriculum. And within this area, I suppose the most talked-about subject is Liberal Studies because this subject, unlike English, Chinese or Mathematics, was introduced 10 years ago and there have been a lot of discussions on whether it should have a curriculum, whether there should be textbooks and how it should be taught in schools and so on. I am awaiting the task force to submit a report to the Government and then we'll decide the way forward. In deciding the way forward, we will have to look at whether the Liberal Studies subject is meeting the original objectives of creating this subject about 10 years ago.

As far as the Second Reading of the bills that have completed scrutiny by the Legislative Council, I can confirm here – in fact you will know it very soon – that the Chief Secretary for Administration and the relevant Principal Officials have already written to the House Committee Chairwoman, the Honourable Starry Lee, to consult her – this is required under the Rules of Procedure – on the resumption of Second Reading of these bills in the Legislative Council. There are a total of 10 bills, I think. Two of the bills have been delayed for a very long time and they are the National Anthem Bill and the Patents (Amendment) Bill (should be Trade Marks (Amendment) Bill). We do expect these two bills to be given priority in the resumption of Second Reading by the Legislative Council. The remaining eight bills could also take their turn to go back to the Legislative Council for resumption of Second Reading debate and hopefully passage by the Legislative Council.

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