

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 this morning (July 10):

Reporter: Is it true that ExCo will approve the inquiry commission's scope of investigation and also will Peter Hansford be the second person in the commission and you will make an announcement today? And with so many incidents surrounding the To Kwa Wan and Exhibition Centre stations, does that mean that lawmakers should use the P&P to look into this incident?

Chief Executive: Sorry, I have to stop you – already three questions, although these questions are interrelated. First of all, I cannot disclose or confirm the agenda of the Executive Council. I hope you will appreciate but I know that society is waiting for the announcement of the appointment of this statutory commission of inquiry (COI). I can tell you here that we will announce it shortly and of course when we announce the appointment of the commission of inquiry, we will announce also the terms of reference of the COI and the appointment of the commissioners. I have said and announced earlier on that we are very privileged to be able to invite Justice Hartmann to be the Chairman of this COI and we have succeeded in identifying a second commissioner, who is an expert in engineering aspects. So, all the full details will be announced once we are in a position to do so. As far as the scope of the COI, I notice that some of the members of the Legislative Council have asked for a widening of the scope in order to include other stations that have been reported to have some irregularities in their works. But the Government takes a view that the other two stations, that is the Exhibition Centre Station and the To Kwa Wan Station's situations, are not the same as the Hung Hom Station. In order to conduct in depth a COI, the terms of reference have to be very exact and very precise, so we have decided that these terms of reference of the COI to be established will be sort of confined to the Hung Hom Station of the Shatin to Central Link. But I want to stress that we will also invite the commission of inquiry to come up with recommendations after reviewing and investigating into what I call the systemic issues concerning the MTR Corporation, as well as the relevant parts of the Government.

Reporter: Last week the Court of Final Appeal recognised LGBT marriage equality, but only for foreign workers. When it comes to issues like adoption, will departments other than Immigration now recognise ... unions, or will the Government use taxpayer dollars to continue fighting this in court?

Chief Executive: Well, first of all, I need to correct your question, because as far as I understand – I read the judgment in full – the appeal case before

the Court of Final Appeal was not about the LGBT rights per se, as you have suggested. The appeal is about the important issue concerning whether the Director of Immigration has exercised fairly, without discrimination, the administration of his policy concerning the issue of dependent visa. So it's a question of immigration policy. So the Hong Kong SAR Government of course fully respects the judgment of the Court of Final Appeal, so we are now studying the judgment and that's why I personally also read the judgment fully once, and we will decide on the next step in compliance with that judgment.

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