

## Transcript of remarks by CE at media session (with photo/video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session after attending a radio programme today (October 28):

Reporter: Mr Lee, on the passing of former Premier Li Keqiang, could you share any personal encounters with him, and how would you comment on his legacy? Also, you mentioned in a programme about problems with sub-divided flats that cannot be solved overnight, but will the task force prioritise those flats with fire safety issues? Thank you.

Chief Executive: I express deep sympathy for the passing away of former Premier Mr Li Keqiang. About 17 months ago in Beijing, former Premier Li handed over to me the order to appoint me as the sixth-term Chief Executive of Hong Kong. I reported to him in Beijing the work of myself and the situation of Hong Kong. Whenever he spoke to me about Hong Kong, I felt very clearly the deep love that he had for Hong Kong. He asked me to ensure the principle of "one country, two systems" is implemented fully and faithfully, to ensure the constitutional order that has been laid down for Hong Kong under the Constitution and the Basic Law. He also reminded me to successfully implement the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong". What impressed me most is that he kept reminding me to develop the economy, so as to address people's concerns about livelihood. He asked me to implement measures to ensure long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. His words always remain in my mind, and I have been implementing policies, such as those I have announced in my Policy Address, in accordance with his directions. I felt his love and passion for Hong Kong. I felt deeply and heavy in my heart to hear the sad news of his passing away. I will be watching very closely on the announcements of the Central People's Government regarding what will be arranged so that we can all express our thoughts and memories of former Premier Li.

Your second question on sub-divided flats. I have formed a study team to look at this long-standing issue, which has bothered Hong Kong, as a result of insufficient supply of land and housing. This problem developed over a long time as a result of the shortages, and it is now housing roughly 200 000 people. We want to address this problem in an orderly manner so that we can find out a solution to examine what will be those flats that we shouldn't allow to exist. I have asked the task force to, first of all, examine how to set a minimum standard to ensure people living in sub-divided flats live in a standard which we think is acceptable in Hong Kong. In our initial study, we have identified some sub-divided flats that are under very bad situations; while for a certain number, their conditions aren't too bad, and the occupants actually have their own properties but have chosen to live in the sub-divided flats because of convenience. So we need to differentiate what are those we should tackle, what are those we should improve, and what are those that we should not allow. That is the task I have given to the task

force. I have given them 10 months because I want them to do a thorough examination of the problem, including visiting the relevant sub-divided flats, consulting stakeholders and looking at different possible measures. What is also important is to ensure that this will be tackled in an orderly manner. Whether the family lives in an acceptable standard sub-divided flat or below, still, it is their home. So I want people to be assured that the Government's measure will eventually deal with it in an orderly manner and address different people's needs.

At the present moment, in fact, the Government has been taking measures for some, for example, that we have identified as unsafe, such as those we found to have existed with standards far below our fire safety standard. There have been cases where we did take measures to stop the existence of these sub-divided flats. We have this experience, and how we will deal with others, of course, I will ask the task force to examine very closely. I am sure that after the task force has made the recommendations to the Government, the whole Government will study it. Also, there will be consultation with stakeholders because it is a problem that has existed for such a long time and cover such a large scale. We want to ensure that all sensible and good suggestions, and constructive ideas are taken into account so as to formulate reasonable, orderly and effective measures to tackle this problem. Thank you very much.

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

