

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

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session with the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, and the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui after inspecting the compulsory testing in the specified "restricted area" in Jordan this afternoon (January 23):

Reporter: Two questions. First of all, will the Government consider offering some sort of compensation to the affected residents, because some people, they're supposed to go to work but because of the lockdown, they're not able to go to work. The second question is, are there plans already to impose such a lockdown in other areas? Is Sham Shui Po going to be the next? And are you under pressure from Beijing to impose this lockdown, because it kind of resembles the way that the Mainland Chinese Government imposed the lockdown?

Chief Executive: The first question, as I have said on many occasions, any public health measures, especially in terms of mandating people to subject to tests, requiring shops and premises to close, require the full co-operation of the citizens and also the businesses. The Government is obliged to provide all the needed assistance, in this case, for example, we know that the residents being affected are not allowed to leave their home for up to 48 hours, so what the Government has done is we provide them with food packs which we believe should be able to support them for the next two days, and if there are other necessary requests, they could always call our hotline and we will try to help. That's the approach that we have taken in supporting this type of operation.

The second point is, I must make it very clear that what we are doing is not what people see in other places as a lockdown, because a lockdown normally means that you are not allowed to go out for a period. But in our case, this prohibition is linked to the tests, that's why in English we call this a "restriction-testing declaration". It is for the purpose of the compulsory testing. Once the compulsory testing for the entire area has been completed, then the order will be lifted and people will be allowed to go out. I would say that there is a difference between what we are doing in Hong Kong and what people normally refer to as "city lockdown" in other parts of the world.

In combating COVID-19, I have said this many times, the Central People's Government attaches great importance to our situation and always stands ready to help. Whenever the Chief Executive asks for assistance in whatever form, they would try to help. We have seen this being demonstrated fully in the provision of masks at the very early stage of the pandemic and also in the provision of almost 600 medical technicians to help us to do the universal mass testing in September, and recently also in the completion of the interim hospital after helping us to provide an extra 1 000 beds in AsiaWorld-Expo

for isolation and community treatment purpose. I may as well tell you that on the question of vaccines, I have also asked for support, and this was in line with what I was given to understand when I visited Beijing last November, and I said this in my Policy Address, that if there was a need, then the Central Government will always try to help by providing a certain amount of vaccines that are either developed or produced in the Mainland for the use of the Hong Kong residents, and on this I have made a particular request to the Central People's Government. It is really the approach and the attitude of helping, and not mandating Hong Kong SARG (Special Administrative Region Government) to take whatever measures, because I think the Central Government fully appreciates the differences in context between Hong Kong and the Mainland and the differences in our legal regime and the differences in how our people behave and react in terms of the government regulations. I am under no pressure whatsoever from the Central People's Government in doing this particular operation or in doing other anti-COVID-19 work.

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



