

Transcript of remarks by CS, S for S, STH and SED at media session (with video)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, together with the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan; and the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, met the media today (November 13). Following is the transcript of remarks from the media session:

Reporter: Secretary, if the situation is so dangerous, why is the EDB (Education Bureau) not ordering a full class suspension? Is the Government simply trying to save face in not suspending classes? Second question, Secretary for Security, what do you make of comments that by storming university campuses that Hong Kong Government is trying to recreate Tiananmen June 4th incident, tending to murder students. What do you have to say on those comments?

Secretary for Education: I think when we consider whether we need to make special arrangements for schools, our first consideration is always the benefit of the students. I think that is the utmost important consideration that we have in mind. This morning, the traffic conditions in different districts are different, and I think every parent has their own consideration, their own situation that they have to consider. So, for the situation this morning, we think that our current system of allowing schools to make school-based decisions and parents to make the decision about whether their kids should go to school or not should be maintained.

Reporter: Isn't the current situation more dangerous than (Typhoon) Mangkhut?

Secretary for Education: I think it is different from a typhoon situation, when the whole Hong Kong was under the influence or the impact (of the typhoon). But of course we will keep monitoring the overall situation and, if necessary, we will make necessary arrangements.

Secretary for Security: I think we should put things in the right perspective. What happened yesterday was at the bridge which leads to the Chinese University, the bridge overstands the Tolo Highway, and there were people overthrowing a lot of things into this main thoroughfare. It is a serious danger to public safety. Imagine somebody driving in that thoroughfare, and is obstructed or hit, then the consequence of a serious traffic accident resulting in serious death or injuries is something that we must take into consideration. The Police have a duty to ensure that this public safety is maintained. That is why they had to ensure that they would take charge of this bridge, which previously was occupied by the mobsters in order to control (the situation) so that there would be no more things being thrown into the thoroughfare. That is the first important thing. When they tried to do what they are required to do under the law to maintain public

safety for the good of everybody using the thoroughfare, then they were under attack. And of course, you could see on television that petrol bombs were thrown at them, so they must act in order to maintain their position, and also to defend themselves. When something like this, which is so outrageously against the law with a lot of violence causing harm to the people there, particularly police officers, they (the Police) of course have to take action, and that is what we saw on television. So we have to put the things in the right perspective. Somebody broke the law by throwing things into the thoroughfare causing serious danger to road traffic and public safety, the Police had to take action, had to take charge of the bridge. They were then faced with attacks with petrol bombs, so they had to take the action, so that should be taken into the full perspective when we look at this incident.

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