

Transcript of remarks by S for S after Fight Crime Committee meeting (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, at a media session at Central Government Offices, Tamar, after the Fight Crime Committee meeting this afternoon (May 17):

Reporter: Good afternoon, two questions from RTHK English News. First, rumours saying the Government is going to take over Apple Daily sooner or later. Would you make any clarification on this? And to what extent do you agree that the bureau's recent move will affect press freedom? The second question is why the asset of media tycoon Jimmy Lai was frozen only a few days ago but not once he was arrested in the beginning of the year? Is it because of the new evidence the force has gathered or obtained? And how will this affect Hong Kong as a financial hub? Thank you.

Secretary for Security: Can you repeat your first question because you have asked quite a few?

Reporter: Rumours saying the Government is going to take over Apple Daily sooner or later, so would you make any clarification regarding this? To what extent do you agree that this bureau's recent move will affect press freedom? Thank you.

Secretary for Security: I shall not be discussing rumours here. But one thing I will emphasise, any activities that endanger national security will not be tolerated. Such activities, or such person, or such organisation, will receive the full force of the law. Endangering national security is a very serious crime. The Government's position is very clear. We will make use of all legal measures to prevent, interdict, and suppress such endangering national security activities. The action that is taken is against criminal activity. Whatever pursuit is being practiced, that pursuit must be taken in accordance with the law. Any activities that contravene the law, then the individuals or the related organisation will have to face the full force of the law. It is illegal activities that we are dealing with, it is not press work. In regard to timing for my issuing of the notices, I will issue it when I have reasonable suspicion that the powers should be exercised. That is the reason why I exercised my power to issue the freezing notices on Friday (May 14).

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