

Transcript of remarks of joint press conference on residual relief work related to extensive flooding caused by torrential rain brought by low pressure associated with remnants of Haikui

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, held a joint press conference today (September 10) on the Government's latest residual relief work progress related to the extensive flooding caused by the torrential rain brought by the low pressure associated with the remnants of Haikui. The Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing; the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung; the Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan; the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung; the Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn; the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Miss Alice Mak; and the Acting Secretary for Education, Mr Sze Chun-fai, also attended. Following is the transcript of remarks of the press conference:

Reporter: First of all, about the Shek O evacuation arrangements, what could have been done better and what will be done to prevent similar incidents from happening? Like some Shek O residents have mentioned, they were not aware of the evacuation plan. Secondly, on the landslides in Red Hill Peninsula, what is the latest assessment and what are the follow up actions? Is there unauthorised construction involved and will the Government make prosecutions? And finally, will authorities provide insurance and subsidy for shops affected by the floods and in what ways if they would? Thank you.

Secretary for Security: For the Shek O evacuation operation, actually starting from the morning before there was an evacuation decision, we were transporting daily necessities and communication equipment, as well as emergency construction officers and our care team to go inside Shek O to provide necessary services. In fact, I understand that the district officer had maintained close liaison with local villagers, as well as their representatives to understand the situation. So once the decision had been made for the evacuation, the Fire Services Department and the Police had immediately set up a temporary pontoon for the evacuation of the residents. I understand that the communication between our government officials, the village representatives and the residents was good. For those who needed to be evacuated, they were all being arranged.

Secretary for Development: Regarding the case in the Redhill Peninsula, relevant departments have inspected the slope with that landslide. And currently, our assessment is that that landslide has affected three houses

sitting on that slope. And among the three, one has imminent danger, and so has been evacuated last evening. As a follow-up action, the relevant departments responsible for maintaining that government slope will do emergency works, first of all, to stabilise the slope. And then when circumstances permit, we will allow the relevant residents to get back to that house under that evacuation arrangement.

As to the question regarding whether there is unauthorised building structures or unlawful occupation of government land, our initial evidence shows that there is indeed some breach of the leases and also unlawful occupation. But our primary focus at the present moment is to stabilise the slope to ensure public safety. And once that is done, we will proceed with the necessary enforcement against the relevant breaches.

Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs: For the relief funds, the Government has already issued a press release introducing various relief funds under the Government to help the needy. We understand the concern of those affected villagers and residents, so various bureaux will deploy extra manpower to help the affected villagers and residents to apply for these relief funds and to speed up the processing.

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