

Transcript of remarks of media session

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung; the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; and the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, met the media this morning (February 21) before attending the meeting of the Legislative Council Finance Committee. Following is the transcript of remarks of the media session:

Reporter: Secretary, can you give us some of the latest updates regarding the situation in Diamond Princess, especially regarding those close contacts when they return back to Hong Kong?

Secretary for Food and Health: Regarding the close contacts of the confirmed cases on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, earlier we learnt from the Japanese Government that they must be quarantined for 14 days after they have been in contact with the confirmed case. The Japanese authority will provide land quarantine facilities for these close contacts. The Department of Health does not think it is ideal for these people to continue to stay on the cruise ship given it has confirmed cases coming out every day. Therefore, it is not an appropriate quarantine facility. We have been working closely with our colleagues in the Immigration Department, through various sources, to urge the Japanese Government to provide land quarantine facilities to these close contacts of the confirmed cases. Up till yesterday, we have learnt from Japanese Government that we are able to take them back if we wish and that they can be exempted from quarantine in Japan. We have very quickly designed a plan for these close contacts of confirmed cases and work closely with our Immigration Department and Security Bureau colleagues so that we can take these close contacts of confirmed cases back to Hong Kong at the earliest convenience.

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