

Video address by CE to members of the public (with video)

Following is the full text (English translation) of the video address by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, to members of the public today (October 5):

Fellow citizens,

Horribly violent incidents took place in various districts in Hong Kong last night. The extreme acts of the masked rioters were shocking and the level of vandalism was unprecedented. These acts were outrageous. The rioters extensively attacked Hong Kong's railway network, including train stations, train compartments and tracks. They wantonly vandalised government buildings and selected shops. They maliciously attacked people who hold different views and continued to target our police officers for attacks. A plainclothes officer was assaulted by a number of rioters and petrol bombs were hurled at him. With his life under threat, the officer fired his pistol in self-defence, hitting a person at the scene.

The extremely violent situation mentioned above made it clear that Hong Kong is in a state of serious public danger, which provides solid ground for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government to invoke the power under the Emergency Regulations Ordinance to put in place the Prohibition on Face Covering Regulation. I noticed that after the Government had announced the plan to put in place the regulation, some people made an application to the court for an interim injunction, which was rejected. The court said that Hong Kong is in a serious situation and that the objective of the Government's plan is to end the violence. Although no one can guarantee that the regulation will successfully bring the violent situation to a complete stop, the court considered that the regulation and its objectives are related. The court also pointed out that there are needs to, through this regulation, control the unlawful assemblies and the large-scale assemblies with a Letter of No Objection issued by the Police, as recently even lawful public assemblies have deviated from their planned routes quickly with some radical protesters resorting to violence.

Forty pro-establishment camp lawmakers supported the HKSAR Government to put in place the anti-mask law. A large number of chambers, media organisations, parent-teacher associations and social organisations also openly expressed their support for it. I noted that the non-pro-establishment camp lawmakers claimed that the HKSAR Government does not have the legal basis, or even circumvented the Legislative Council, in putting in place the regulation. I must solemnly point out that these are not facts and are groundless. The HKSAR Government is taking appropriate action based on the power under an existing legislation.

On the views expressed by some overseas officials and lawmakers, I would

like to ask them to see clearly the nature of the matter: Hong Kong is facing unprecedented violent attacks and the Government needs to resolutely use legal means to stop the violence and restore public peace, safeguarding people's rights and freedoms in their daily living and preventing a small number of rioters from destroying them. In fact, anti-mask laws are adopted by many advanced countries in Europe and in America.

Public peace has been badly breached recently, and people's daily travelling or commutes to work are being seriously affected. I also noticed that many shopping malls are closed and many shops had to suspend their businesses today, posing a tremendous impact on the public in Hong Kong.

Fellow citizens, the extreme acts of the rioters brought dark hours to Hong Kong last night and half paralysed society today. Everyone is worried, anxious and even in fear. The HKSAR Government will curb the violence with the greatest determination. I appeal to everyone to support the HKSAR Government to stop the violence in accordance with the law and condemn violence together as well as dissociate from the rioters resolutely. We should no longer condone rioters who are destroying Hong Kong, our treasured home. We must bring calm back to Hong Kong as soon as possible.